10¢

DETECTIVE STORIES

MYSTERY MAGAZINE

MAY 15, 1923 NO. 132

FEATURING

The WOMAN from NOWHERE

by JACK BECHDOLT

MYSTERY MAGAZINE

Vol. VI MAY 15, 1923 No. 132

ISSUED TWICE A MONTH

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FEATURE STORY

THE WOMAN FROM NOWHERE. By Jack Bechdolt 3

SERIAL STORY

THE SECRET OF THE BLACK BAG — Part I. By Harold F. Podhaski 41

SHORT STORIES

THE SERPENT CIRCLE. By George Arthur Gray and Roy A. Giles 20
LUCK IN DETECTING CRIMINALS. By Carl H. Getz 27
THE WRONG MAN. By Frederick C. Davis 31
BREAKING THE FRAME-UP. By D. C. Retsloff 53

MISCELLANEOUS ARTICLES

A HAUNTED HOUSE 18
BEGGING LETTER TRICKS 30
A BAD MONEY GANG 37
JAPANESE COURTS 38
STONE IDOL IN NEGRO'S CABIN 49
WOMEN DETECTIVES 50
TRAPPING A SMUGGLER 52
THE FRENCH POLICE 58

Copyright, 1923, by Harry E. Wolff, Publisher, Inc., 166 West 23d St., New York. All rights reserved. Entered as Second-Class Matter Novem ber 5, 1917, at the Post-Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879.

Published by Harry E. Wolff, Publisher, Inc., 166 West 23d St., New York.

Harry E. Wolff, President; L. F. Wilzin, Trea surer; Charles E. Nylander, Secretary.

LU. SENARENS, Editor.

Notice.—No letters will be answered or manuscripts returned unless accompanied by sufficient postage. The publishers disclaim responsibility for the loss of unsolicited manuscripts. Authors to save time will please name price desired for submitted material.

Subscription Price: Domestic, Single Copy, 10 Cents; Domestic, Yearly, $2.50; Canada, $2.75; Foreign, $3.00.

All remittances should be sent by express money order, P. O. order, check, registered letter, or draft to insure safety. We will not be responsible for money sent otherwise.

Our Next Issue

A SPLENDID detective novelette will be the feature of our next number. It contains one of the most interesting plots ever written by Frank Blighton, a master-hand at detective fiction.

The title is

"THE TIME DETECTIVE"

Every line of this powerful story grips your interest, arouses your curiosity and holds you to the end. If you want a real literary treat, do not fail to read it.

There will be from three to five short mystery and detective stories from authors of worldwide fame. Every one of these gems have been selected with the greatest care, as we are bound to give our readers only the best material procurable.

The serial begun in this issue will be concluded in the next. We have a number of these entertaining short serials, to be issued from time to time, and every one will absorb your interest to the utmost.

Our writers have furnished a number of extra fine special articles relating to different branches of the police department in the detection of crime. By reading them you will find many mysteries explained regarding the hazardous work of our guardians of the peace.

We have also secured some particularly interesting items on a multitude of subjects that cannot fail to please.

In short, with a beautiful new two-tone cover, large legible type, handsome inside illustrations, and a choice assortment of reading matter, the next number of this magazine will be one of the smartest we have ever published.

Do not fail to get a copy and show it to your friends, as we want them to see what fine stories we are publishing.

THE EDITOR.

The WOMAN from NOWHERE

by JACK BECHDOLT

CHAPTER ONE

LOST: AN OLD-FASHIONED GIRL

THE caller who presented himself at the door of Ford Markman, the noted detective, was a youngish red-haired man. His figure was well set up, his face tanned with sunshine and weather, his blue eyes clear with a trick of narrowing as he gazed at objects. He wore loose, comfortable tweeds, a tweed cap, and instead of the usual starched collar a soft-collared shirt, which gave him a slightly informal appearance, more compatible with comfort than style.

The card he handed to Markman's servant bore the name William Macrath.

"Macrath?" Markman mused, with eyebrows raised. "We do not know the gentleman, Grantham?"

Grantham, the detective's servant, pursed his lips and shook his head.

"I think not, sir," he answered.

"And yet it seems as if the name was familiar," Markman went on. "The spelling is peculiar. If it were the usual 'McGrath' it would attract no attention. I have seen that name somewhere."

"The gentleman seems quite impatient," Grantham suggested with an apologetic cough.

"Ah, yes, no doubt," Markman conceded. The old detective was used to impatient callers. He continued to muse for several minutes, lounging over his late breakfast, a broad, short man in loose, baggy clothing, his large head covered with iron-gray hair, the face seamed and wrinkled, a quizzical, kindly sparkle in his small eyes. Ford Markman's loose gray clothing, old-style collar and black string bow tie proclaimed him a gentleman of the old school, and in this case appearances did not lie. Unlike many of his more modern competitors, his balance of spare time seemed limitless. He did not believe in nervous hurry.

The detective chuckled abruptly.

"That's it, I'm sure! Grantham, just hand me that last copy of 'The Studio,' will you? Yes, here we are. See, Grantham?"

He displayed to the servant a full-page picture in colors, a reproduction of a mural painting, and his finger traced out beneath the title the words:

"From a painting by William Macrath."

"Well, well!" Markman exclaimed, pleased; "an artist! I like artists, Grantham. Show him in, please."

William Macrath came into the room on

Grantham's heels. The servant had no opportunity to announce him before he was speaking.

"Mr. Markman! You don't know me, and I must apologize for intruding on you this way. I have heard of you through a mutual friend, a Doctor Bursel of the Ajax Mines, who was visiting me recently."

"Bursel? Yes, indeed!" Markman smiled. "We met in a little mining town called Canyon; very interesting case in connection with that! I saw Bursel when he was in New York last month."

"So Bursel told me," Macrath explained, "and he told me also about your wonderful work in discovering the thief who had been robbing the Ajax company payrolls. It is because of what he told me that I venture to bring my troubles to you. I need advice, Mr. Markman! I need the help of a man with your kind of brain! This is not the sort of case I want to take to the police. The young woman involved is, I am certain, an innocent girl. Police interference might be very distasteful to her; might frighten her to some rash act. But I do need help like the very devil. If any amount of money will persuade you——"

Markman made a gesture of dissent. "I am not doing professional detective work just now, Mr. Macrath. But I can recommend you to a good agency."

"No!" Macrath's exclamation was loud and decidedly in the negative. "This isn't any job for detective agencies. I would not trust them. Listen to my story! Judge for yourself if I don't deserve some help in untangling the most bewildering chain of adventures that ever happened to a peaceable, law-abiding man. For the sake of a beautiful, innocent girl, Markman, at least do me a favor of listening!"

Markman's eyes began to twinkle.

"For the sake of a pretty girl I will do a lot," he declared. "You have me interested, Mr. Macrath."

Macrath drew his chair nearer to Markman's, sank his voice to a confidential tone and began:

"I am a painter and fairly successful, unmarried and live alone in my studio in the old Manhattan building in the Chelsea section; perhaps you know it?"

"The old studio building! Certainly."

"Then you know it is a very quiet, pleasant neighborhood made up mostly of old brick dwelling houses, a great many of which are still occupied by the original owners—old West Side families. This is particularly true of the entire square in which the Manhattan building stands. The people of the square pride themselves on the perfect respectability of these residences. In cases where a lease is made the applicants are obliged to furnish the best references."

"Understood!" Markman agreed with a chuckle. "I pretty well know what sticklers these old New Yorkers are for the conventions."

"I am telling you this," said Macrath, "in order that you will understand that the unconventional heroine of this story is, I am certain, as innocent of any impropriety as your own daughter might be, if you have a daughter. Nothing but some dread necessity, some terrible experience could have driven this lovely girl to my windows after midnight."

"Wait, wait!" Markman begged; "aren't you running ahead of your story? Suppose you start at the beginning."

"It begins just there! Before that nothing unusual has happened to me in the fifteen years I have occupied a top floor, rear studio, at the Manhattan. Last Wednesday night I came home late from the theatre and sat in my studio, smoking a cigar before going to bed. The big north light of the studio looks on the flat roof of a house, not four feet below the windowsills. You know how these blocks are, one roof touching another all the way around the square. It was a clear, starlit night with a touch of frost in the air. I had opened one of the panels of the big window for ventilation. As I sat smoking I was puzzled by a muffled sound that seemed to be the sobbing of a woman in distress.

"I pushed my window wider open, leaped out and called several times. There was no answer. I was just closing the glass panel when a form appeared outside, peer-

ing in at me—a young woman, hands clasped, her face raised to mine. There were tears in her eyes—big, dark eyes—and she seemed to entreat me to help her. And the startling, strangest thing of all was that this woman was dressed in the style of the Sixties: queer, frilled bonnet, a cashmere shawl across her shoulders, a ruffled dress, with wide-ruffled, billowy skirt, and beneath that the white fringe of pantalets, on her feet little strap pumps. She was like a vision, Markman! A vision out of the past—a poor, little stray ghost of some belle of the Sixties, with her laces, and ringlets, and fingerless silk mitts, wringing her hands, and begging me to help her! I—I could hardly believe that I really saw her."

"Pretty, you say?"

"Beautiful!" Macrath cried with ringing conviction. "More beautiful than I can tell you."

"Go on, man! I like your mystery."

"This isn't any laughing matter," Macrath warned him quickly. "I'm afraid it may be tragedy. I opened the window, still afraid I had some sort of hallucination. 'What is it?' I asked. 'What can I do for you?'

"She begged to be let in. I climbed out to the roof and helped her into my studio. She was no vision, I knew then, but a flesh-and-blood woman—or girl rather—perhaps twenty-one or twenty-two years old, blonde hair, dark-brown eyes, five feet two or three in stature, slender and a ravishing beauty. Her face showed traces of rouging, but tears had played the devil with her make-up. Altogether in that quaint costume of our grandmothers, coming to me out of nowhere, she was the loveliest, strangest visitor a man ever had." Macrath sighed heavily. "I don't mind telling you," he added with engaging frankness, "that I fell in love with her the minute I set my eyes on her. Altogether I haven't seen her for an hour, but I love her. I'm afraid I always will."

"And why 'afraid'?" Markman asked.

"Because," Macrath cried, anguish in his voice, "I found her only to lose her. I may never see her again."

CHAPTER TWO

THE VISITOR FROM NOWHERE

FORD MARKMAN glanced shrewdly at his visitor.

William Macrath looked a sane, reliable sort of man.

Though he affected the common sense, comfortable dress of the artist, there were no signs of what is excused as "temperament in his face or bearing.

He looked, in fact, a young man not gifted with too much imagination—a man who had spent his thirty odd years in strict attention to his profession of painting mural decorations. Markman decided he was a man whose word could be relied upon under any circumstances. He was prejudiced in Macrath's favor.

"Please tell me all about your visitor and how you lost her," Markman prompted.

Macrath complied eagerly.

"When I helped her into my studio through the window I naturally asked at once what was her trouble and what I could do to aid her. She gave me a strange, frightened look and began to tremble so violently I put her into a chair. She remained with her hands before her face, sobbing and shaking until I was afraid she would faint. I gave her water to drink, soothed her, and finally she looked fully at me and declared: 'I am going to trust you, and I ask you to trust me. Take me on faith! Will you believe in me, even if I can't explain to you?'

"I told her I would do anything she asked. I meant it, too. Believe in her! Anybody that saw that girl would believe in her and help her! She wanted shelter for the night. She wanted to remain hid, no matter who might come asking about her. It was evident she was in great trouble, had received some very severe shock. What was the nature of the shock I could not learn. At every reference to her recent experience she turned white, and began to trembled so violently I did not dare question her. Markman, it may sound ridiculous to you, but I tell you I didn't even *want* to ask about her past. Unless she wanted to

tell me I was willing to take her on faith, as she asked me to—take her on faith, preposterous clothes, strange appearance under my window, and all to the contrary notwithstanding. I told her so.

"Obviously what the girl needed was rest. She had been through some experience that had broken her endurance—some shock that left her near hysteria. It was no time to ask about her history. Common humanity insisted on my extending what hospitality I could!

"I do some light housekeeping in my studio. I prepared some broth and insisted on her taking a little. Then I gave her the door key and told her to make herself as comfortable as she could for the night. It happens a friend of mine who has a studio on the floor below is in Europe, and I have entry there. I went to his studio and camped for the night.

"I don't think I slept at all until morning. I was so excited by this strange visitor, so curious to account for her appearance, her strange dress, her condition of helplessness, that sleep was out of the question. About eight next morning I went out to get some hot coffee and walked for a while, determined to give my strange guest plenty of time to rest. I did not come back to my studio until ten o'clock. I rapped and got no answer. I waited until eleven. Then, again getting no answer to my knocks, I got alarmed and tried the door. It was unlocked. The key was on the inside. The studio was empty."

"Rather ungrateful guest to leave without a word of thanks," Markman commented.

"It was not like her! It must have been done against her will!" Macrath exclaimed. "Little as I saw of her, I still trust her. I don't know her name or her history, but I trust her! Her last words as she wished me good-night were: 'In the morning, when I am stronger, I shall tell you everything, because I trust you—and I need your help.' Then she vanished, just as if she had never been. No! That is not like her."

"But you're quite sure it was no vision?" Markman urged.

"I wouldn't be quite sure, except for this! Is that evidence of a vision?"

The artist took something from his pocket and laid it in the detective's hand—a woman's silk glove, one of the fingerless mitts of grandmother's girlhood. The glove was real. Markman examined it gravely, saw it was but slightly worn. He sniffed it. A faint odor of perfume clung about it, the delicate, romantic scene of lavender.

"That was all she left. It lay in the middle of the floor, as though dropped accidentally," Macrath explained. "But visions are not made of such silk as that!"

"No," Markman agreed, examining the glove carefully. "What's more, this glove seems to disprove the first easy explanation that suggested itself. My skeptical mind, taking the simplest course, prompted me to think your visitor a guest of a masquerade, driven into the night by some unpleasantness. But this glove does not look like a costume shop article. If you look closely, you will find it bears marks of a crease, as though folded away for many years. Also the scene of lavender, that does not attach to a newly made article. Lavender is faint. It needs time to permeate a fabric. Her clothes, at least the glove, must have been the real thing, from some grandmother's trunk."

"So were all the clothes. I am used to costumes, know them pretty thoroughly, and the finer details of them. Remember I use costume models in my pictures. Everything that girl wore was the product of dressmakers and costumers of the Sixties. She was the very incarnation of a belle of Civil War days."

"And like some lovely ghost, she vanished with the first light of dawn!"

"I can't understand it," Macrath agreed. "But I am going to find her, if she can be found. I must find her. The mystery has got on my nerves. I can't work for thinking of her. And, what is more serious, I have every reason to believe from the manner of her coming, from her condition of acute terror, from the circumstances of her disappearance after she had found a safe hiding, that something sinister lies behind our mystery. Because I am convinced of that, I am begging your help."

Macrath looked earnestly at the detective.

"From what my friend Bursel tells me," he murmured, "I don't think you're the kind of man anybody in need appeals to in vain."

Markman considered slowly. "There seems very little that I can do; really, the way you tell it, it's as mysterious as a blank wall. But it's an enchanting mystery. It appeals to my sense of the romantic, I admit! I can't promise any results, but at least I would like to look over the ground with you. If you are ready to return to your studio——"

Macrath leaped to his feet.

"Thank God!" he said hoarsely. "I hoped you would do that! We'll go right now. Come on."

Grantham interrupted them.

"You are wanted at the telephone, Mr. Markman. The police commissioner says it is very important."

The artist fumed impatiently while Markman was gone. When the detective returned Macrath felt a premonitory chill at his heart—knew that he would meet a disappointment.

"I am very, very sorry," Markman explained. "An urgent matter has come up. It promises to be a most unusual case, and my friend the police commissioner has asked me to look it over. I am not actively connected with the force now, yet a request like this one is almost like a command upon my time. I hope you understand——"

"Then you can't help me!" Macrath exclaimed dismally.

"Indeed I shall, at the first opportunity! But not this morning. Go home, Mr. Macrath. Wait for me. The first moment I have, day or night, I'll come to you, and we'll talk over your mystery case."

Markman shook the artist's hand warmly as he gave this assurance. He saw Macrath to the door. Then he hustled into his hat and coat and sent Grantham to call the nearest taxi.

Macrath's mystery was all very well—a charming trifle, but this second call for his aid, as described by the police commissioner, promised a case of real importance—such a sensational case as New York had not known in years.

CHAPTER THREE

MYSTERY OF AN EMPTY HOUSE

THE residence of Petronius Daskam was one of the spots on Fifth avenue about which most native New Yorkers were abysmally ignorant, and most everybody else in the United States extraordinarily well informed. Every person who visited the metropolis had heard of and inquired about that old brownstone-fronted "mansion" and stood not five minutes' walk from the junction of the Avenue and Forty-second street—a gloomy, solid relic of bygone Victorian days, the last vestige of that age of innocence left by the flood tide of commercialism which had changed the street of fashion into a street of shops. The lecturers of the rubber-neck busses found this one of the most interesting points on their tour and always pointed out the tall, narrow, ugly house with its closed shutters and the high brick wall shutting it off from the hurrying thousands of the street; told its original cost, gave startling figures on the present value of the realty and pointed out that the dwelling still stood in a private yard of its own—a private yard and lawn, worth at present rates a million dollars by itself.

Even native-born New Yorkers, who are unusually badly informed about the points of interest in their own city, were familiar with the name of Petronius Daskam. It was a name like that of Sage, or Morgan, or Rockefeller, typifying a huge fortune. But unlike other names of its sort, the Daskam name belonged to a past generation. There were no Daskams among the younger men and women of the city—no heirs to all this money so far as was known.

Petronius Daskam, who began the fortune by driving a public hack in the streets of Manhattan, and by shrewd investments and speculations swelled it to enormous size, had never married. He retired from business in 1896. He continued to live very simply in his brownstone house on the Avenue, indifferent to the changes that went on about it. His neighbors of old days, fa-

mous families of wealth and fashion, sold their holdings and built again far to the north. Petronius Daskam refused to sell one inch of ground. Back in 1880 he had bought the land for a home, built his house upon it and proposed to live out his life there.

Living alone, cared for by a middle-aged housekeeper, a white-haired butler and a half-dozen servants, none of them under fifty, he was forgotten by the busy world, or, if remembered at all, thought of only as a legend—a mythical personage, a peer of old Peter Stuyvesant or Father Knickerbocker himself.

On the day when William Macrath called on Ford Markman with his queer story about the vanishing girl from nowhere, one Timothy Aloysius Canrahan, a patrolman of seven years' experience on the force, strolled down the sunny side of Chelsea Square, on the west side of Manhattan. From across the street an acquaintance called to him and hurried to join him. The acquaintance was a neighborhood character, known only as Tony. He managed to get a fair living by tending furnaces, sweeping areas, polishing brass doorknobs and planting little garden plots for many of the old families in the block.

Tony dragged the patrolman across the street, talking volubly in broken English. The gist of his remarks was that something was wrong at 909. Morning newspapers had accumulated in the entry, there were five milk bottles languishing at the area door, the house showed no signs of life. Tony was not employed by the lessor of that particular house, but in common with other servants of the neighborhood he had a sharp eye for all that went on in the row.

Patrolman Canrahan accompanied the furnace tender to 909, somewhat reluctant to pry into affairs off the pavement. At Tony's urging he examined the doors and found the house evidently deserted. Then, urged still further, he swung himself to an iron grill balcony before one of the long front windows and peeped within. The drawn curtains had been swung apart a crack, and what the patrolman saw prompted him to send in haste for the agent of the property.

A curious trio entered the silent dwelling house a little later. They found no sign of life there. It had been stripped bare of furnishings on the ground floor, or almost bare, for in the long double parlor there remained one comfortably upholstered chair, and in that chair, facing the rear of the house, on his face a look of horrified surprise that made the beholders shudder, was the body of an old man. The man had been dead for several days. He was presently identified as Petronius Daskam, owner of the Fifth avenue mansion and fortune.

On the body were no marks of violence. Nowhere in the house was there any weapon which might have caused death. What brought Daskam to this house, several miles from his own home, what had killed him there, whence had gone the tenants of the place, how they had contrived to remove their effects with them—these and all other queries touching upon the case were riddles challenging the wisdom of the Sphinx herself.

Faced with this extraordinary puzzle, the commissioner of police sent in haste for his friend and oft-times adviser, Ford Markman.

If ever there was a case suited to try Markman's talents this was the one.

CHAPTER FOUR

FIND THE WOMAN!

MACRATH, the artist, sat at the window of his studio. Evening light was fading into night. Macrath had waited all day in the hope that Ford Markman would keep his promise to help him solve the mystery of his midnight visitor.

The artist sat very much as he had that night several days past when the mysterious, ghost-like figure in the quaint dress of the Sixties had materialized under his window. He was thinking of the girl, despairing of ever seeing her again.

A slight noise from the roof below startled him. Something was moving in the shadows. The artist peered out, but could distinguish nothing definite. Some prowling cat, perhaps.

The noise was repeated, a low murmur of voices. Macrath started up, every nerve taut. Was the uncanny manifestation of that eventful night about to be repeated?

He flung open the window and called:

"Who's there? Is somebody out there? Speak up!"

A voice answered, a voice that began with a low chuckle: "Hello, Macrath. Don't be scared, it's not a ghost to-night. It's I—Ford Markman!"

"Markman! What the devil does this mean?"

"Mind if I come in?" Markman asked and, receiving the artist's bewildered ascent, was heard to add to another person in the shadows: "It's all right, Canrahan. I know Mr. Macrath. Better go back to 909 and report to the lieutenant for orders. I shan't need you further this evening." With these words the stocky figure of the detective came into view, his hands reached up to seize the window ledge, and he came scrambling into the studio.

"Let's have some light, and show me where I can wash, will you?" Markman said by way of greeting.

The light showed that he needed soap and water. His broad, seamed face was smudged with soot. His clothes were dusty and linen grimed, and his bow tie stood awry.

"There ought to be a law to make people keep their roofs clean." Markman grinned ruefully. "The roof outside is coated with soot."

A few minutes later, clean again and reasonably restored to normal, Markman explained:

"Of course you're wondering about all this, Macrath. Well, I didn't crawl across the roofs just to amuse myself by frightening you. I'm on the trail of your young lady of mystery."

"You have learned something! You really have some idea."

Markman shook his head.

"Not much more idea than you have, except this: That girl must be found. I have connected her with a very serious affair. I am convinced that she can explain all or part of the circumstances surrounding the death of Petronius Daskam. Of course you have seen the evening papers?"

Macrath had not seen the papers. He had not been in any mood to look at newspapers. Markman explained briefly the discovery of Daskam's body and the circumstances of the new mystery. He concluded: "And that house, Number 909 South Chelsea Square, is just on the opposite side of this block we are in. Look, you can see its chimneys across there! I came to you over the housetops from the very house itself. And your beautiful midnight visitor followed that same route the other night. She left her footprints in the soot coating the roof."

Macrath became voluble at once.

"I refuse to believe a word of it!" he cried. "That girl is innocent. She has no knowledge of the murder of Daskam. You are accusing a woman whom you have never seen."

"Macrath," Markman said soothingly, his hand on the artist's shoulder, "I accuse nobody. But I do say that your mysterious girl came from the house of mystery on the opposite side of this block, and I shrewdly suspect that she has knowledge of the death of Petronius Daskam. In proof of my statement I offer this!"

Markman displayed a pair of silk finger mitts, such another pair as the single glove Macrath had shown him. Like the first, they showed folds from years of idleness in some trunk or bureau drawer, and exhaled the same faint scent of lavendar.

"These," said the detective, "I found crumpled and tossed into a dark corner of a closet in that empty house. They are slightly smaller in size than the one you have—doubtless your lady tried several pairs before she was fitted—and she tried them on in that house where Daskam died."

Macrath started to protest again, but fell silent. He recalled the fright of his strange

visitor, her acute nervous condition; her strange demand for shelter and trust, her disappearance—all these argued guilty knowledge. His face expressed his emotions, and Markman answered with unexpected words of cheer:

"She is innocent. I'm willing to believe that. I'm sure of it, in fact. Sit down, Macrath, and listen. I say the girl must be found. Our one chance of solving a most unusual mystery depends upon her. Let me explain what we have learned so far.

"We will start with Daskam. All his household has been examined and cross-examined. The old man has kept to himself these last fifteen years. Old friends died or were alienated. He seldom left his house. He appeared to have few interests save his books. He was a cantankerous, close-mouthed, close-fisted old curmudgeon—and nobody loved him. But within the past two months Daskam showed a change. Six times in that period he has sent for a public taxi and been driven out in the evening. Where he was driven we have not established, but I do know, from neighbors, that at least six times in the past two months a public taxi has brought a visitor to Number 909. I'll gamble my head that that visitor was Daskam. What brought him there we must find out.

"Number 909 was taken eleven months ago, on a two-year lease, by a Mr. George Gordon. The lease was arranged through a broker, who showed excellent references for his client. But Mr. Gordon himself seems to be a rare bird. I cannot find anybody who is at all sure of having seen him. A woman housekeeper, and a maid, and one man servant cared for the property, and life seemed to go on behind its parlor curtains much as it does all over this quiet neighborhood. However lace curtains conceal a lot! For instance, it is plain that the house was never furnished beyond the basement floor, where the servants lived, and the parlor floor, where Daskam's body was found. The evidence is unmistakable. Number 909 was not the dwelling of the mysterious Mr. Gordon. It was used as a rendezvous and a blind. And what interests me most of all, Macrath, and suggests a theory I am not yet at liberty to disclose, is a very peculiar arrangement of the second story, including a neat trap cut in the floor communicating with the rear parlor. I have a very definite notion, in brief, that Number 909 was leased, was furnished, and was maintained solely for one purpose, and that purpose was a design against either the fortune or the life of Petronius Daskam. And your beautiful young lady of mystery, who perhaps with absolute innocence of this sinister purpose, was the chief tool in a fiendishly clever plot. That is why we must find her. When we find her we shall be led to the mysterious Mr. Gordon."

"Yes, but how!" Macrath groaned. "How can we find her? You might as well try to page a ghost! She came here, she passed the night in my studio, she vanished like morning mist."

"Oh, surely not by evaporation," Markman smiled. "She walked away or rode away."

"I stand corrected! I inquired to-day, and I find that a taxi called at the street entrance of this building that morning. The janitress of the building remembers seeing several persons, she thought one a woman, going away in it."

"Exactly!" Markman cried, delighted. "And now, Macrath, here is your chance to help. You can aid the police to solve a mystery, you can help find your ghostly lady and, who knows? it is not improbable you may save an innocent girl from a deal of very serious trouble. Everything depends upon you and your skill!"

"Me!" the artist gasped. "What can I do? What can I possibly do that I have not already done?"

The detective said seriously:

"You are an artist, Mr. Macrath. By your own account you were greatly impressed by the beauty of this woman who came to you seeking shelter. You have described her in some detail, but no words can express the fine shades of description which your memory must hold—your trained memory. To-night, now, I want you to paint me a portrait of your ghost

woman, such a portrait as perhaps you have never done before. It must resemble her to the life. It must express her so that the poorest memory is refreshed, because I shall have your picture photographed and copies sent to every policeman in the city and adjacent territory, and every driver of a taxi, every person who rents rooms, every possible source of information we can reach will be shown this picture until our search results in success and the girl is located. Can you do this?"

Macrath gasped: "I—I can try. I will try."

"Then begin! At once! And remember, man, paint as you never painted before! The girl's reputation, her safety, perhaps her life itself, depends upon your skill and speed!"

CHAPTER FIVE

MACRATH'S MASTERPIECE.

MACRATH, the artist, sat with his head sunk between his hands, his elbows propped on the wide arms of one of Markman's easy-chairs. During the two days that elapsed since the finishing of the portrait of the ghost-woman the artist had been Markman's guest.

Until midnight Macrath labored before his easel that strangest night of his life. Markman sat in a far corner of the studio, observing, unobtrusive.

The artist worked like a wild man. He groaned with the effort. Beads of sweat stood on his white face.

At times he painted furiously. Then in a frenzy he scraped off with a palette knife all that his brush had applied.

He sat rigid for long periods, teeth clenched, brows knotted, forcing his memory to recall exactly the likeness of his mysterious visitor.

At last he declared the portrait done. He could add nothing. He was miserably certain that he had failed.

Since that night Macrath had slept little. He showed signs of an approaching nervous breakdown. He reproached himself constantly with lack of skill.

"I have idealized her!" he would groan. "Because I love her I have made her picture impossibly pretty. I was blind to those little defects and variations from the classic idea which make the real likeness. I have failed!"

Markman responded with unfailing patience and unfailing optimism. The police must be allowed time for patient, painstaking search. Time, that was all that was needed, time and patience to endure the waiting.

The telephone bell rang. It had rung many times in these days of waiting, but always it startled Macrath to trembling, hysterical attention. He waited now, tense, while Markman answered and listened.

Markman called his servant and sent the man for a taxi. "Come, Macrath," he said quietly, "the girl has been found, thanks to your picture. A whole lot may depend on our haste! She's in a rooming house."

Macrath was hustling into his coat as he spoke: "How can you say she has been found? after all our disappointments, the rumors and mistakes."

Markman did not pause to answer. He seized the artist's arm and hurried him to the waiting cab. They were driven to a side street address near Morningside Heights. Before a modest apartment-house a plain-clothes policeman joined them.

"The landlady positively identifies her," he reported to Markman. "She took a suite here five days ago; it's one of those furnished housekeeping places for transients. She's been alone since, not even a telephone call until about five o'clock this afternoon. A man called her to the telephone; it's a public phone in the lower hall; that's how the landlady is sure. Ask for Miss Lang, or you'll find the name over her own doorbell if you look in the vestibule."

"You're sure the landlady hasn't had a chance to warn her?" Markman asked.

"Not a chance. She's been out shopping since a quarter past five. Look out!"

A taxi was drawing toward the curb.

The three men strolled to a distance, warned by the plain-clothesman's exclamation. Thus from safety they saw a young woman dismiss the cab and enter the apartment house hurriedly. Macrath's hand was on Markman's arm. He was trembling violently. Without shadow of doubt they were looking upon the young woman of mystery, the same strange wraith that had materialized under the artist's studio window, the original of his memory portrait.

But now the young woman was clad in the fashion of 1922 A veil partly clouded her features. Her arms were filled with several bundles. Markman read the imprint on them. As she disappeared into the building she cast a quick, suspicious look over her shoulder.

"Timed to the exact minute," Ford Markman whispered, delight in his manner. "An hour later and she might be gone beyond hope of our finding her. That telephone call evidently was her cue to move. Now we must give her five minutes longer, time to get into her rooms."

Markman and Macrath went to the apartment door. The plain-clothesman was left conveniently stationed in the hall. The visitors had not rung the street bell, and the woman of mystery had no warning of their call until Markman rapped softly at the door.

"Who is it?" a voice called. The tone was pleasant, musical, but blurred by sharp anxiety.

"Let me talk," Markman cautioned the artist. Raising his voice, he answered: "I'm from Burns's store, Miss Lang. There has been a mistake in the wrapping department. They gave you the wrong parcel."

A moment of silence. Macrath waited in a daze, unable to discover what had inspired Markman's speech. Then the door opened cautiously. Ford Markman crowded forward, explaining volubly: "The salesgirl discovered her mistake just after you left. They sent me right after you on a motorcycle."

"I don't understand," the girl was saying. "They do not know my name in that store. There must be some mistake."

Markman had the door open and was in the room, Macrath at his heels. The detective closed the door gently and leaned against it. "There is no mistake," he answered calmly, "because I am not from Burns's store at all. I merely happened to notice by the wrapping of your packages that you had been shopping there. Don't be alarmed. We mean you no harm. In fact, I think you recognize this gentleman as one who has already befriended you."

The detective indicated Macrath. The young woman gasped as he stepped into view. She retreated uncertainly across the room.

"Miss Lang," Markman said, "please sit down and don't be alarmed about us. We are not here to arrest you, although I do represent the police."

"The police!"

The girl's lips barely whispered the words. Her hand caught the back of a chair, and she leaned against it heavily. "Then it's too late," she whispered. "You know everything! But I'm innocent! Dear God, help me make them believe that I am innocent!"

She turned to Macrath, hands clasped entreatingly. "You believe?" she begged. "You will believe what I say?"

Before Macrath could answer Markman's chuckle broke in. His hand patted the girl's shoulder in a fatherly caress. "There," he murmured, "do sit down. You have done no harm. The police are not seeking to arrest you and never have been. The man who told you that they were lied to you—and he lied because of his own guilty purpose. All that we ask from you is the truth, a true statement of your own connection with a man who goes by the name of Gordon, a description of the man and nothing more. Come, Miss Lang, if you will speak quickly, you can help us and help yourself more than you imagine!"

"He is right. Trust him!" Macrath added. "This is Mr. Markman, a friend of mine. You trusted me once. I beg you to trust him."

"You ask it?" Miss Lang hesitated.

"With all my heart! The truth will help us all!"

Still the girl hesitated, eyeing them doubt-

fully. Markman noted that she was as beautiful as Macrath had described her, though at the moment her cheeks were pale and her eyes wide with alarm. The detective's imagination pictured her as she had appeared to the artist that strange midnight and he could understand how such beauty, clad in the quaint, billowy dress of a bygone era had instantly captivated Macrath's imagination.

"I am going to tell everything," Miss Lang decided. "I don't understand any of it! My head is in a whirl. You are strangers—or almost strangers; everybody in this big town is a stranger; yet something tells me to trust you, rather than—than any other adviser. I must throw myself on your mercy! If you are honest men, help me! Help me now!"

CHAPTER SIX

CYNTHIA LANG'S STORY

THE young woman gave her name, Cynthia Lang. She had been born and lived all her life in a small Ohio town. Her parents were dead, and until recently she worked as a clerk in a local drygoods store in the home town.

"I suppose I must be like a thousand—a million—silly girls in this country to-day." Cynthia Lang smiled wanly. "I was ambitious for what I called a career—fame, fortune, applause. Like most of the girls in Ardsville, I was mad about motion pictures and screen stars.

"Three nights a week they changed the films at the Palace Theatre, and three nights a week I was there to see the new program. I tried to study the methods of the women who have succeeded on the screen. I practised their gestures, their expressions before my little mirror in Mrs. Donovan's boarding house. I began saving money from my salary, with the idea that some day I would go out to Hollywood, perhaps find an engagement, and become famous. Oh, I know it is foolish! I know there are thousands like me, crowding about the big studio lots, begging for a chance, many of them making every sacrifice to satisfy a silly vanity.

"But I did not call my motive vanity! I told myself that I was different! My eyes were open, I said. I understood the difficulties of the game. And I believed I had talent; I still believe I have talent!

"My chance, what I then called my golden opportunity, came in a strange way. I happened to see a Chicago newspaper, and in it was printed an advertisement among the classified columns. A producer of picture plays was seeking a certain type for a picture story. The description seemed to fit me. A good engagement was offered the girl whose appearance and screen ability seemed to fit the part. I sent my photograph to the address given. Two weeks later I was asked by letter to come to New York for a personal interview with George Gordon, director of Superlative Films. A half-dozen others would be competing with me, I was told. The letter enclosed a hundred dollars for traveling expenses."

"That letter," Markman interrupted. "Have you that still?"

Cynthia Lang nodded, rose, opened a small traveling bag which stood near, and handed a typewritten letter to the detective. Markman glanced at the enclosure, holding it delicately by the extreme corners. "I suppose you have read this many times?" he smiled encouragingly.

Cynthia Lang nodded.

"Did any other person ever see it—handle it?"

"Never! I had few friends; I didn't boast of my good luck; I was afraid of disappointment and ridicule."

"Splendid!" Markman exclaimed. "Just a moment, Miss Lang. Will you be good enough to make the imprint of your thumb and finger tips on this card?" Cynthia Lang pressed the ineradicable autograph of identification on the prepared card Markman offered. "Now, please go on," Markman said.

"I never heard of Superlative Films," the girl went on. "I would have been suspicious of the offer if the money had not been enclosed. This seemed a guaranty of good

faith. I came to New York and interviewed Mr. Gordon in a little office near Times Square. That was a week—ten days ago.

"I was taken before a motion picture camera for a test film. Three days later I was notified that the test was a success, and I was hired. Gordon wanted me to go to work at once. In that same office he read to me the scenario of the story he said he was producing. It was a Civil War play. I was to have a leading rôle."

Markman nodded and told her to continue.

"Gordon wanted to begin work that evening. He said we would join the rest of the cast in the studio at Fort Lee next day, but there were a few shots in which I appeared alone, and these must be made in an old-fashioned dwelling house they had rented for this purpose in the city. It was dusk when we drove there in a taxi. I had no idea where we were going and could not identify the address to save my life. We entered a house, and I was led directly to the second floor and shown an improvised dressing-room.

"A costume was ready for me—a curious, beautiful dress of Civil War time fashion. Gordon explained they had been to great trouble securing a dress and all the essentials of the period. I found the costume fitted me very well, though we discarded several pairs of gloves in fitting my hands.

"The appearance of that house was exactly what I expected of a house that was to be used for a few scenes in a film story. The front rooms were bare and dusty with long disuse. My little dressing-room had been hastily made ready. I noted the electric light wires were laid along the floor, and evidently the house had never had electric lights before.

"The large rear room was furnished about halfway of its depth, the rest of the floor being bare, and walls bare. It was a stage set, representing a quaint old-style house. Cameras and Cooper-Hewitt lights crowded the bare space.

"Gordon introduced me to a man named Smith, whom he called his assistant director. Together they rehearsed me again and again in one scene. I know it by heart! I shall never forget it now!

"First I threw myself on a chaise longue. I buried my face in my hands and cried as if my heart was breaking. How I worked to express that grief without showing my face! I was sore in every muscle!

"Then I uncovered my face, turned slowly; they made me count one, two, three, four—count slowly to time the action. I rose unsteadily. I took a step forward, another, tottering a little, counting to myself to make it slow. I turned my face up into the light, tears in my eyes. I was supposed to be heartbroken. I came forward, hands stretched before me, and cried out in sudden passion: 'You gave me your promise—and broke it. A woman's honor is just a toy you play with! Keep your money! I shall never touch one cent of it. When you say you love me you lie! you lie! you lie!' "

Unconsciously Cynthia Lang was on her feet, dramatizing that speech. The vehemence of her words and action, her voice rising from a suppressed monotone to a wild scream of *"lie!"* thrilled the two listeners.

She turned on them, smiling sadly again, and reseated herself.

"I shall never forget that speech! Over and over they made me repeat the words and action. Gordon was all business. So was the other man, Smith. The whole thing was hard work, just as I had been told studio work would be. I suspected nothing wrong!

"Gordon had been in and out of the room. Finally he said I would do. There would be some delay, waiting for a reel of film or some such thing. Gordon told me that Smith would photograph the scene. Then I would be through for the night and was to report at his office in the morning. He said good-night to me and left.

"I waited perhaps an hour, fearfully nervous that I could not rise to my opportunity; nervous and excited and unbelievably happy that I had found the chance to begin a screen career!"

The detective nodded.

"Smith called me from the little dressing-

room at last," she went on. "The lights were all arranged, a subdued lighting with one spotlight that would bring me up sharp as I came toward the camera. I took my place on the chaise longue. Smith spoke nervously, his voice low, coaching me exactly what I was to do. I waited again.

"At last Smith's tense whisper, 'Action! Camera!'

"I began the scene. I did not see Smith or the camera. I saw nothing, thought of nothing but my scene. I played it exactly as the two men had coached me. On those last words I heard my own voice. It seemed weird in that silent place.

"Then something happened that startled me to rigid attention. My last cry found an echo that rang through the house. It was another scream, a terrible, unearthly scream that broke at last into a choking discord. But it was a man's voice that screamed.

"The silence that followed was more dreadful than the scream. I stood perfectly still for some minutes, bewildered, frightened so that I could scarcely breathe.

"I called at last for Smith—for Gordon. There was no answer. I was alone in this strange room; alone with the buzzing lights and weird surroundings. I ran to the door. I went to my little dressing-room and sank in a chair. For a time I do not remember. Perhaps my fright turned me faint."

"Yes, yes," cried Markman as she paused. "What happened next?"

"I crept out of that little room at last. Still I was alone on the second floor of the house. I forced myself to go down the stairs to the first floor. It was dark there in the hall. I gritted my teeth and opened a door to the first floor, calling for the men. There was no answer. I went into the room, drawn by some impulse I could not resist. It was like a nightmare in which one is forced to open a door, to go into some place where he knows a dreadful thing awaits him!

"And the end of it was all that a nightmare could be! In the big chair, all alone—just the faint light that sifted through the curtains from the street lamp outside the house to show him—an old man, a dreadful old man with face and hands like parchment. He was dead in a chair. On his face was a look that threatened to drive me mad.

"I ran from that place, stumbled back up the stairs, dashed about that studio room with its hooded lights, and found a window. The window opened on a roof. I climbed out of it and sank down in the dark under the stairs, cooled by the frosty wind.

"Hours afterward I realized I must do something or die of chill. I dared not go back to that dreadful house. I made my way somehow, climbing, taking dreadful chances, from roof to roof, until I came beneath a lighted studio window. And so I came to you!"

Cynthia turned toward Macrath, summoning her brave smile. "And you were kind to me," she murmured gratefully.

CHAPTER SEVEN

MR. GORDON NEWARK

WHAT else Cynthia Lang might have said, or what Macrath might have replied to her spontaneous expression of gratitude, must be a matter of speculation. Markman interrupted with a sharp exclamation.

"What happened to you when you left Mr. Macrath's studio?"

"Gordon had seen where I took refuge. He came early next morning to Mr. Macrath's studio and grabbed me as I left the doorway. He expected me to leave the building and was waiting for me in a cab. The cab carried me away. He told me that I had involved myself in the murder of a very rich and powerful old man. He advised me that my only hope of safety was to conceal myself exactly as he directed. And to-day he informed me he had secured transportation for me to a safer place of hiding in South America. The steamship sails before morning."

"And when is he coming to get you?"

The girl glanced at her wrist watch. "At any moment!" she cried. "He said seven——"

"Please go into your dressing-room and close the door," Markman directed soberly. "Macrath, can you help me in a pinch?"

The artist nodded gloomily.

"I'd like to land just one punch on this Gordon's jaw," he muttered through clenched teeth.

"You may get the chance. Stand still, keep your mouth shut and wait!" said Markman.

He stationed the artist flat against the wall, just where the door when opened would conceal him.

This had scarcely been done when, without warning, a cautious knock came against the panels. Markman opened the door, keeping himself out of sight until a tall, slender, middle-aged man, wrapped and muffled, had stepped into the room. "Good-evening, Gordon Newark," the detective said suavely.

He had recognized the stranger as a notorious crook.

The man addressed wheeled with practised swiftness and made a dart for the door. Macrath slammed it in his face.

Newark's fingers produced a pistol so rapidly it seemed to materialize from thin air. The weapon was aimed at Markman's breast. It was then Macrath leaped, caught him about the neck, and brought him low.

Detective Markman, though he was a middle-aged man, joined the tangled pair. The door flew open again as a plain-clothesman, drawn by noise of the scuffle, joined the fray. In the space of two minutes Gordon Newark was manacled, disarmed and seated in a chair. Though he breathed hard from his exertions, the prisoner otherwise appeared quite calm again.

"Well, Markman," he drawled in a nasal whine, "what d'you think you can tie to me this time."

"Miss Lang!" Markman called, ignoring his question.

Cynthia came into the room.

"Is this the man?"

"That is the man."

"Then, Mr. Newark, I don't think we'll have much trouble sending you up for the death of Petronius Daskam. I doubt if a murder charge will stick, but even manslaughter, considering your past reputation, carries a severe penalty."

Newark was staring at Cynthia. "So it was you who double-crossed me?" he asked coldly.

"No," Markman answered, "you double-crossed yourself. This time, as usual, you were much too elaborate in your cleverness. That is often the weakness of a blackmail plot."

Newark nodded with the air of a reasonable man, smiling a little as he asked:

"Just what do you think you've got on me? I doubt if you can prove a case, Markman."

The detective answered in the same vein:

"You are a clever, plausible rascal, Gordon Newark, alias Gordon Hines, alias Gordon the Great! I've not had the pleasure of meeting you since that affair of the ruby of Marduk-Nasir, and I must say that your ability to slip out of prisons is almost uncanny. Your long training as a stock actor and as a theatrical magician has sharpened your wits, I see. Really, if you wanted to be honest, you might make a fortune."

"Ah, yes, but that's so stupid!" Newark murmured. "Get to your case, Markman, if you have any case."

"I'm coming to that, my friend. First, then, there was Petronius Daskam, a rich old rascal, eminently respectable. I must surmise a little now, as I know your character. Looking about for lucrative prey you evidently discovered old Daskam, a rich man, without kin. You probably delved into his past just as I have been doing since his death and learned that many years ago, when his financial rise began, Daskam deserted the girl-wife he married in an up-State village, cast her off brutally. And now, a few years from the grave at best, the memory of the old brutality had risen like an uneasy ghost to torture him.

"I can readily imagine your unholy glee at this discovery, Newark! This was the very situation that would delight you. It fitted so conveniently into a game you have played before—the impersonation of a spirit medium, an adviser who summons wraiths from the country beyond to console and counsel his clients. And the recent lecture

tour of Dr. Conan Doyle, the recent books by other authorities, have roused a public interest in spirit manifestation which made your path easy."

"Well?" growled the crook uneasily.

"You got a photograph of the wronged wife? Oh, yes, you did! I ran across your trail in the recent police search into Daskam's early history. For your purpose it was then necessary to find a woman who could be made up as the spirit of that long-dead wife. And how simple and plausible to pretend you were seeking a film star!

"Your purpose, Mr. Newark, was to confront Daskam with this wraith of your own manufacture and scare the old man into parting with his money as a penance for his sins. Of course you were arranging that this conscience gift of his, whatever form it should take, would find its way into your own hands! Impersonating a motion picture producer, you then hired Miss Cynthia Lang."

"Prove it," Newark said coolly.

"Thank you, I have proof!" Markman drew from his pocket the letter Cynthia Lang had received. He produced the chemicals necessary to develop any finger-prints left upon the paper and leisurely proceeded with the experiment. Newark interrupted with a defiant laugh.

"All right! I admit I wrote the letter. Probably my finger-prints are on it."

"Then the rest of it," Markman went on gravely, "we have from Miss Lang's own story. She was taken to 909, the house you prepared and used for your spirit manifestations. The room at the rear of the second floor, which seemed to her a motion picture studio, was cleverly prepared. A trap in the ceiling communicated with the rear parlor below. You used a mirror, I presume, to reflect whatever Miss Lang did to some convenient screen, so that she appeared to the credulous old man who sat in your parlor as a wraith immaterial as air——"

"One moment, Professor Markman," Newark interrupted again, "but, as you've got me, I dislike being credited with clumsy methods. I have professional pride! I used a mirror to reflect the young lady's acts, as you say, but instead of any screen on which they appeared to the eye, I reflected them into a large crystal gazing globe—a very much more artistic method, you must allow."

"And one which left less machinery to be removed," Markman agreed, with a glance of admiration for this master criminal. "You did well in everything. You overlooked no details, Mr. Newark. Your plan seemed foul-proof, accident-proof in every way—in every way but one, in fact! There was one thing you could not reckon on—the one thing which so often trips clever men of your sort! Fate, Mr. Newark—the inevitable, inscrutable laws of blind justice! Your plan was good, the mechanical illusion perfect, too perfect, in fact. What you meant to frighten an old man into parting with his money did frighten him, but too well. Petronius Daskam, lured into your trap to see the spirit of a woman long dead, saw so realistic a representation that his weak old heart failed him and he died there! You didn't reckon that, Newark."

"Damn him, I did not!" Newark groaned. "And a nice kettle of trouble his death left us in. Then, while we're getting the place cleared out, all the junk out of the way, so as to leave no trace, the girl gets out. I thought we were done for then. But we traced her path across the roofs and found her again."

"And when you abducted her you frightened her into flight with you," Markman said. "But you see how it is, Newark; you can't beat the game. Smart as you are you never get the best of it in the end. That greatest of principles, justice, is against you and finds you out."

"But, Markman!" Newark protested, somewhat bored at the homily, "what pleasure is there in winning an easy game? It's the difficulty of the thing that intrigues me, and some day, perhaps after you have passed on, shall we say, and there is none to take your place, I shall win!"

"Keep on hoping," Markman smiled grimly. "Unless I'm very much mistaken you're going to get fifteen or twenty years of uninterrupted quiet in a safe place up the river to do your hoping in."

A Haunted House

TO this day it remains a mystery, and it will probably ever remain so. There is no question of delusion; no one could or can deny it. The facts are facts, plain and unvarnished; and as they were told to the writer by a friend they shall be repeated. As there is no use in alarming people, we shall not mention the number of the house. It is, however, on the west side of Berkeley Square, London, W., and we repeat that the tale is absolutely true.

The house was at that time apparently untenanted. It was certainly in a bad state of repair, and as certainly not to be let. No tenant was desirous to inhabit it; for, though a caretaker and his wife lived in the basement, they could not enter the haunted room; and the mansion had remained empty and desolate in the whirl of Mayfair.

These were the conditions when a family from the country came, and, despite the exterior appearance of the house, were certainly pleased with its interior arrangements. The house suited all parties, and it was painted and renovated sufficiently to satisfy the tenants for the season. The trades-people were all on the tiptoe of expectation, for no one had ever lived in the house for four consecutive weeks. Rent had been surrendered, and a hurried departure had again caused the advent of the caretakers. "It was their doing," was the whispered comment. "Three people say the house is haunted, and so they have house room." But they never dissuaded a tenant. Many tenants came and went; sounds were heard, and something uncanny was in possession, for no one remained.

The family who came into temporary possession of the mansion had no idea of its history, and it is at this period that the writer's acquaintance with the house began. The new tenants took possession and were handed over all the keys. There were occupants for all the bedrooms, and one upper apartment was allotted to the housemaid. It was a nicely furnished room at the back of the house; small but, except for a peculiar atmosphere, very comfortable. "No one had hitherto slept in that room," they said, "and it was rather damp." So a fire was lighted, and the bed made ready for its new occupant. The girl came in in good time and went upstairs to bed. Everything was in readiness for her, and the lady's maid, who had indicated the apartment, had left her. Ere she had got into bed a piercing shriek aroused the household; then a heavy fall in the housemaid's room caused them to hasten upstairs. What could be the matter? Mistress and servants rushed up together; master followed. The room was broken open, and a terrible sight met the gaze of the intruders. The girl, partly dressed, was lying insensible on the floor in a dead faint. She was laid on the bed, and remedies were applied as soon as possible. The convulsive movements of her limbs were succeeded by violent ravings, and it required two men to hold her, so terrible were her struggles. Her appearance was that of a maniac, and when, with the assistance of a doctor, she had been calmed, it was perceived, with unutterable terror, that the poor girl was "raving mad." She was quite exhausted for a while, but the paroxysms again began. She was removed as soon as possible, and after a while a lucid interval intervened. To questions addressed to her she only replied, with terrified mien and nameless horror in her face: "Yes, I saw it! I saw it!" and relapsed into imbecility.

Now, what she had seen was a mystery. She never gave any account of the strange sight that met her gaze. The story got wind and was laughed at, was credited wholly or

partly according to the constitutions of the hearers. The tenants avoided the room, which was again locked up, and no more was heard of "the ghost" for a while.

It happened one evening that the tenants gave a party. There was a small dance, and among the guests were some guardsmen and other officers. There was some curiosity expressed as to the haunted room, and many of the guests—particularly the military ones—laughed at the idea of any danger or ghost. Finally the subject absorbed general attention; dancing was discarded for discussion; the believers outnumbered the skeptics.

"I'll bet you," said a young officer, "that I will go and remain an hour in the haunted room and come down unharmed." "Done!" exclaimed his opponents. "Don't!" exclaimed the more timorous of his friends. The lady of the house and her husband both endeavored to dissuade him. But he was firm. He laughed ghosts to scorn and jestingly bade "farewell" to his companions.

He carried a candle, and as he prepared to ascend to the room, which had been lighted with gas, some presentiment seems to have affected him, but he laughed away all remonstrance. "You won't frighten me with a regiment of ghosts," he said. "But I'll secure my retreat. Remember, if I ring once, you will be ready to come upstairs, because you will then understand that I have seen something and may require assistance." They promised, and he continued: "But if I ring twice, you will at once know that I am in peril, and then come up as fast as ever you can. I shall not ring without reason." They wished the young fellow good luck, and standing in and near the drawing-room door, watched him ascend the staircase. He laughed them a cheery "good-by," entered the room, which was fully lighted, and shut the door loudly. The noise echoed through the house, now silent, for every one, even the servants, were on the qui vive, and the ringing of the bell was anxiously expected. The men stood on the landing; the ladies generally remained in the rooms, conversing only in whispers, and feeling, as one expressed it, as if something was going to happen. He had been gone fifteen minutes, and no sound had alarmed the guests. Bets began to be talked of and wagers tendered that he would not ring, and that there was no "ghost" nor mystery at all.

Suddenly a faint "ting, ting" was heard from the basement. There was no mistake—he had rung the bell! On the startling notice the ladies ran out, and some of the men began to ascend the stairs. A few were for rushing up at once, but the courage of their friend and their agreement held them back; still they were ready for a dash up the flight at the first tingle of the second bell.

Some terrible minutes passed; the ticking of the clock was distinctly audible. Then a loud, violent crash of the bell; a sound of fearful significance to all who heard it. Two seconds sufficed for the men to reach the room and burst open the door. This is what they saw: The young officer, stretched in his evening dress on the bed, rigid, dead! His jaw had dropped; his eyes were staring open vacantly in mortal terror; a dumb, stony fear and awful horror stamped on his features! His left hand clutched the bell rope which had summoned up his friends. But no presence was visible. No form appeared to alarm the others. There he lay, stark, staring in death! What he had seen—whether demon or spirit—must forever remain a mystery as great as ever puzzled the London world. He died, scared to daeth by the awful apparition which he had in some manner defied or offended.

Some time after the condition of the house and the mystery again claimed attention. Questions were publicly addressed to those interested, but no reply was given, nor was any explanation ever afforded of this perfectly true mystery of Berkeley Square.

THE SERPENT CIRCLE

by George Arthur Gray
and
Roy A. Giles

CHAPTER ONE

A LONG line of tenements stretched towards the river on New York's lower East Side. It was mid-afternoon, and children were playing in the street. A woman, hair disheveled, thrust her head out of a third-story window, grabbed the neck of her dress together, and piped:

"Annie-e-e!"

"Yes, mother!" shrilly came from a tot below.

"Go to Griste's and get some bread."

The little girl deftly caught a wad of paper-wrapped small change thrown by her mother and scurried down the street. A dog ki-yied out of the way of a truck.

Policeman Velotta came around the corner swinging his club.

Just then a revolver barked from a hallway and the policeman fell dead. The usual crowd collected, and the usual excitement resulted.

A young woman was among many who thrust their heads out of tenement windows to see what the noise was about in the street. She saw white-coated ambulance orderlies carry the blue-garbed form of the Sicilian policeman into the waiting ambulance.

"Humph," she said to herself, "somebody shot a cop."

Then she went into the room again and went on fussing with her hair.

The instant the shot was fired Rocco Angelaro, stock and swarthy offshoot of Sicilian banditry, a fiddle player by profession and a crook by preference, dodged back through a long ground-floor hallway, from the front of which he had fired the shot. He pulled his coat flap over a revolver. Through a small rear court into a rear entrance on another street he made his way and out through another building to the street. Walking to the corner, he threw his gun into a sewer.

"Now I can go ahead and make the money," he mused. "Velotta is the only man who knew me in Sicily. The girl will now wish she had never slapped me in the face that day I tried to kiss and hug her in the garden near Palermo."

Hatred filled his heart; hatred, avarice and scorn. His mind was one that never forgot and that harbored secret thoughts always of new ways to wring cruel anguish in the heart of one from whom he desired

to blackmail money or on whom he wished to wreak revenge.

For this wicked Angelaro was a member of the terrible Camorra, that ring of Sicilian secret societies with ramifications throughout the world. The Camorra has been described by a famous New York detective as a gang composed of a number of gangs. Each gang has a leader and the leaders have their leader. Each leader's word is law in his gang. Each member carries out orders to kill to keep from being killed himself for disobeying orders. The Camorra holds all world records for torture, murder and kidnapping. Motives for these crimes are blackmail, business rivalry, family feuds and card games. The Camorra will do anything for money. It has been written:

"The Camorra works like a pack of wolves. Sometimes the packs run together for a big hunt. Wolves not useful to the pack are slain. Sometimes two or more wolves fight and one or both are killed. Any wolf can run with any pack as soon as he is recognized as a wolf. In trying to be a leader any wolf may be killed, or if he kills a leader he may succeed him by a series of successive killings and good hunting."

It was into the jaws of such a wolf that Rosa Partello-Marello, pretty wife of Salvatore Marello, had fallen. Her only protector, besides her husband, had died when Policeman Velotta fell. Just why her husband had been permitted to live will develop.

Rocco, following the shooting of the policeman, went directly to the tenement where he lived. Marello and his wife occupied a better class apartment, for Marello had worked hard, saved money and invested wisely. He now operated a small bank and brokerage office and could afford small luxuries.

CHAPTER TWO

LEAVING his bank in his modest town car rather earlier than usual, Salvatore Marello drove through a mist of rain to his home. The gloomy weather portrayed a vague and haunting premonition in his own heart, where lurked a painful suspicion.

"I trust my wife," he mused as he drove his car into the garage near his home and continued on foot, "but I am, in my great love, a fool, for it is the sweetest things that are taken from us at times, and Rosa is so beautiful! Yes, I trust my wife, but who could trust the terrible world about her? I certainly am at a loss to understand why she is away so much of late when I phone and why she is so preoccupied and worried, why she starts and trembles, and why her sleep is so troubled."

He walked briskly into the street where he lived and looked up at the window of his apartment, where he was wont to catch a smile and a hand-wave from his dear little wife leaning out in the light of the window. Her face was not at the window now. This disappointed him, but then he thought that the hour was unusual. He had been working late these long summer evenings.

Suddenly he saw his wife step from their doorway. Her step was agitated. Her whole manner betrayed anxiety. She did not see him. He followed her, and she walked the several blocks into a poorer quarter of Little Italy and direct to a tenement wherein was the apartment of Rocco.

"The only person she could possibly know in there is Rocco," mused Marello. "I dislike to spy on her, but if she has been deceived she will need me."

As Rosa, the pretty wife, climbed the stairs her husband went through the building and climbed a back fire-escape. Crouched on the fire-escape, cluttered with pans and mops, brooms, buckets and what-not, he saw Rocco leave the rear sitting-room—so identical in this class of "railroad flat" tenements—and answer a ring at the bell.

Rocco was in his shirt sleeves as he led Rosa into the sitting-room. His lips curled into a taunting smile. The girl-wife trembled, her features worked in fear.

"Well, little pigeon—or should I say cat—you are prompt," said Rocco in audible Italian. "I trust you have not neglected to

bring with you what I desire most—what the brotherhood needs so badly?"

Rosa answered in choking, inaudible words. Her manner caused her husband to shake with pent-up anger, but he remained at his listening post, trying to catch with his ear her words.

The pair moved farther from the window. Rosa turned, facing her tormentor. In Italian she denounced him for a blackguard. He taunted her with sarcastic compliments. He put his hands on her shoulders.

She cried out like a wounded bird. Her hand went to her bosom. She drew a dagger and lunged at Rocco. He fell. She swooned, and the husband, crashing glass, plunged into the room and caught her unconscious form in his arms. He lifted her lightly, and crooning love words, he carried the light of his life out into the night.

CHAPTER THREE

IN the apartment house where Rocco lived, Mary Burke, janitress, was monarch and guardian angel. She was up early the morning Rocco was stabbed. She went through the halls, floor after floor, waking bachelors, passing "top o' the mornings" with women and crooning "Come-all-yez" to the children.

At Rocco's door she knocked loudly, as was her habit. This morning there was no answer, so she knocked again with all the weight of her two hundred pounds of Irish avoirdupois. She knocked again and again, and after each knock she listened.

"An' phwere the divil is that Rocco? Been drunk an' playin' cards, like as not." She tried the door. It opened. She entered.

"May the Lord of hivin help us," she screamed a minute later. "Help, murder, fire!" she shrieked, waving her fat arms as she billowed down the staircase, two steps at a time. The next instant her husband stood in the street entrance, lustily blowing a police whistle. A policeman at the corner turned and ran into the place, followed by a curious and chattering crowd of men, women and half-clad youngsters.

At the door he drove the crowd back.

"What's wrong here?" he demanded.

"Somebody's knifed a wop on the third floor back," explained Mary Burke, taking the stairs on the jump, following the policeman.

"Is that all?" said the policeman. "I thought somebody was hurt."

Agitated crowds thronged the halls and crowded into Rocco's rooms. The policeman, bending over the form of Rocco, saw signs of life.

"Get some water!" he yelled at Mary Burke.

"It ain't water he's fond of," insisted Mary, but she brought the water nevertheless, and Rocco appeared so relieved that the policeman said:

"He'll be all right in a few days. I'll call the wagon."

Newspaper reporters soon swarmed the place, but failed to get much of a story. One paper told it in the headlines:

ITALIAN VIOLINIST STABBED
Rocco Marello, of Grand Hotel Orchestra, Found in His Rooms, Wounded, Refuses to Talk

At the hospital a policeman guarded Rocco. At intervals he turned to Rocco's cot and asked:

"Come on, old man; who knifed you?"

"That is my business," was the inevitable reply, "and I mind my own business."

"Somebody ought to break your empty head," observed the policeman finally.

To this Rocco was silent. A nurse glided into the room. She was pretty, and Rocco's eyes surveyed her in sullen, disrespectful admiration. The girl turned to the policeman as if glad of his presence.

"This patient will be out of here in no time," she said, "providing you officers do not want to hold him. He soon will be back on the streets getting the air."

There was something in the girl's tone that conveyed the idea to the policeman that she believed Rocco was better off anywhere than at large.

"We can't hold him," said the officer, glancing over his paper, admiration and understanding in his eyes. "I'd like to nail that guy for about thirty years, but you can't keep a bird forever just because somebody has slipped him a stab wound."

Rocco, who knew this as well as the policeman, turned over comfortably and eyed the nurse out of the room.

Because of the fact that Rocco could not be held, and because of certain secret cables from Naples, where the Camorra is not loved, the Secret Service had just made an urgent request to the local police department for co-operation in Rocco's case.

CHAPTER FOUR

DETECTIVE SERGEANT PAT WALSH—no one ever called him Patrick—had a record for bringing clues to light where none appeared to exist. He had solved many of the most puzzling and intricate cases ever recorded at the Central Office. But Sergeant Walsh was not excited about his record. He was just what might be called a "regular" detective, as well as a regular fellow. He had spent the better part of his life on the force and had learned that the detective business needs something besides a badge and a blackjack. He also knew that the police of Little Italy and much of the rough stuff of the colony were engineered by the Big Boss, a dish-nosed, flabby-faced brute, who feared only one thing in the world—the Camorra. He knew, too, that the Big Boss held forth in as vile a little back room speak-easy as ever dispensed deadly, etherized "hootch."

On the morning of the day that police headquarters were notified that Angelaro was leaving the hospital Walsh strolled into the Central Office smoking a cigar and humming the "River Shannon." He stepped forward and braced himself against the captain's desk.

"For the luva Mike," he said to the captain, "can't you pick a live case for me? I'm getting finnical following a lotta umbrella boosters and doormat birds."

"I know how you feel," said the captain; "nothing in this game but the excitement. I've got something here that may break a good case. You remember that Angelaro, who was stabbed by the banker's wife? Well, hop to it; everybody else has fallen down on it, and the newspapers have begun kidding us. This Angelaro seems to be a Camorra leader, but we haven't been able to hang anything on him. You like blind leads. See if you can get a line on that fiddle player and make him talk."

"On my way," grinned back Walsh, who was already moving towards the door. "If I need any help I'll let you know."

Walsh went directly to the hospital and announced himself at the desk.

"I want to talk to that Angelaro bird," he said in a low tone.

"That's him. Quick, he's leaving. Taking his things out now."

Walsh turned and saw the Italian at another desk. He saw him accept some small money from an attendant. He watched Rocco's hand glide to his pocket, and as he withdrew it noticed a small bit of tightly folded paper drop to the floor. Angelaro walked out. Walsh in an instant had the paper bit, and was following Angelaro. He unfolded the paper as he walked. It was a square of ordinary newspaper, and on it was rudely pictured a sign that has spread terror in New York, as well as Sicily. A small black circle, which was a crude representation of a serpent swallowing its own tail, was drawn in black ink, and within the circle was roughly sketched in red ink a stiletto-pierced, bleeding heart.

"They are right about the Camorra stuff, all right, all right," he mused, and then quickened his steps to follow the violin player. "He'll kill somebody sure," ran his thoughts, "if I don't make short work of getting something on him that I can lock him up for. I'll get him, all right. I never framed a man in my life, and I won't now, but I'll get him. Luck is with me. I can feel it in the air."

Rocco, with his arm still in a sling and with a shoulder that still gave him pain, was in no sweet humor. He made straight for the little speak-easy conducted by the

Big Boss. He entered, with Walsh still shadowing him, but sliding and edging in the gloom of the dark side of a badly ventilated hallway.

Walsh saw Rocco give the knock, two and three taps, which let the Big Boss's friends into the dispensary. Rocco entered. Walsh planted his ear at the door, and he could hear voices. The voice of the Big Boss was agitated; it was plain he feared Angelaro.

"Don't be so slow," said Angelaro. "I want a gun, and I want one quick, and it is none of your business what I want it for!" the detective heard as Rocco raised his voice.

"The sign, the sign!" cried the agitated voice of the Big Boss, for Rocco had taken out of his pocket a newspaper and had quickly and crudely sketched on its margin the sign of the serpent.

"Yes," said Rocco, triumph in his voice, "but it means nothing if you don't slip me that gun quick."

"Thanks," said Rocco; "now we're friends again," and Walsh knew the gun had been passed.

Walsh jumped back into a shadow just in time, for the door of the poison whisky den opened and Rocco and the Big Boss hurried down the hall to the street. Walsh followed and saw the men hail a taxi. He jumped on the running board of another car and told the driver to follow the taxi. As he did so the Big Boss looked back and recognized him. It was plain he would warn Rocco. But the taxi kept on until it reached a block on the traffic, when Rocco tried the very trick that Walsh believed he would try. He left the taxi in the traffic jam and tried to make his get-away through the cluttered cars of all sizes. He did not lose Walsh, however, for when he again started to walk Walsh was still close behind him, although he did not know it.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE weather outside the apartment of Salvatore and Rosa Marello was cloudy. Inside the apartment all was confusion. Rosa, her pretty face the picture of fear, urged her husband to hurry and help pack a pair of handbags.

"Angelaro is coming," she said. "He will have his assassins with him. I feel it. We must leave the city until we have lost him forever, my love. Your lawyer will keep our secret and will settle your affairs."

The husband was little less agitated than his wife, for both had lived in Sicily and in New York, and they had known death to come swiftly and suddenly after an attack on a Camorrista.

A knock came at the door of the little apartment, and both jumped back, their faces livid with apprehension.

"Who—who can it be? Can it be Rocco? Oh, my husband," trembled the girl-wife Rosa in desperation. Salvatore with his hand to his hip pocket, his fingers clutching a revolver, stood ready as Rosa threw open the door.

A small Italian boy stood revealed. He carried a bundle.

"Want some nice green peppers to-day?" asked the urchin, his face wreathed in an ingratiating smile.

"Not to-day, dear," said Rosa, her voice betraying relief.

"Here's a dime for you," said the husband. The boy knew he would get the dime each visit whether he sold the peppers or not.

Together the husband and wife continued packing, and with both grips done they rushed to the door and threw it open.

What greeted them caused them to start back in terror. There stepped into the room Rocco Angelaro, with a revolver drawn and held in his one good hand. The smile of the devil was on his twisted face.

Rocco glanced at the baggage and said: "I hope I have not stopped your little journey."

Then, turning to Salvatore, he ordered: "Stick up your hands and keep 'em up, and that little she-cat of a wife of yours better not move."

At the insult Salvatore took a step forward, but Rocco thrust the revolver painfully against his stomach.

"So you defied the sign of the serpent,"

leered Rocco, "and so you both must pay the penalty. Look at each other a little while, but don't kiss. Both of you will then die."

When lightning strikes it is what humans call suddenly. Around police headquarters they have a way of saying that Detective Sergeant Patrick Walsh's middle name is lightning. He struck, as usual, like lightning in this instance. Rocco was borne down under the weight of the big detective, who had leaped like a panther, as in following Rocco he had moved like one, stealthily, softly, quickly. When the two came to their feet the detective had the nippers on Rocco. Rosa had fainted in the arms of her husband. Walsh had seen women do this before, and knew that if they must faint there is no better place than in the arms of one who loves them.

Walsh pulled from his pocket the slip bearing the sign of the serpent and waited for Rosa to recover.

"What do you know about this?" he demanded, showing her the paper.

"It is the sign of a band," said Rosa, "and he," pointing to Rocco, "is their leader."

"Righto," said Walsh. "We have counted three hundred of these Camorra murders in New York alone, and this bird here will account for some of them."

CHAPTER SIX

ASSURED of the protection of the department whom Walsh represented so ably, Rosa told her story to the police:

In her far-off native land Rosa, beautiful as the bud for which she was named, had lived amid sunshine and flowers. In her father's garden Rocco had worked as a gardener, and taking an interest in the boy who was of a poor family, Rosa's father had paid for his musical education. But let Rosa tell it:

"Rocco, he believed he was to marry me, signors," she said, hanging her head. "But why he should think so I know not, for he was not of our people. We were of Naples. My father owned the land in Sicily and the great garden where we lived some of the time and where my Salvatore followed me from our beloved Naples. Salvatore, he was not rich, but he was so industrious and so good. When I was just a little girl he play with me and I know he love me.

"One day in the garden I am running, and I no see Salvatore. I run into his arms and he kiss me. Then I can't help it. I hang my head on his shoulder. Oh, my Mother, and the roses all around me, they droop their heads, too.

"Rocco, I no think of him, but when I raise my head my eyes all weep, signors; I see Rocco peering, and his face it is horrible." The girl trembled.

"After that I let Salvatore kiss me, and I don't care who sees. I let him hold me and tell me that we go away together to United States, where Salvatore he promise to make much money. I no care for money. I care only for Salvatore.

"Always from then Rocco, he try to kiss me. I tell him to go away. I no tell Salvatore, for Salvatore kill him, and Sicilians they know we are Neapolitan and they make trouble. One time Rocco he grab me. He love me and he want to tell other people that he kiss me. I slap his face, and for this I suffer. I slap him so hard he bleed a little on his lip. By that blood which he reach and get on his finger he swear that he will make Salvatore and me suffer.

"We arrange to sail, and before we sail the padre he marry us, and my father he gives us passage to the United States for his gift. Salvatore would not take of the money my father offers. My Salvatore he is so proud. He loves me and so he wants to work hard for me.

"We come to United States and for a few years we are heaven, so happy. My Salvatore he make money, more and more, and we save a little and then he opens his bank and I cheer and encourage him. The neighbors some of them are poor, but we try to help them. They love Salvatore. They no mind if he is a banker.

"Sometimes we go out to dine after we come from the opera. Now and then we can afford to spend so much. One night, it

was late, and we enter a hotel because my Salvatore he say I am so lovely he wishes the people to see me. I say he is foolish, so sweet foolish, and as we dine we are happy. Then, Holy Mother, I glance up at the orchestra and there, trouble of my life, there is Rocco, fiddling and grinning down at me, his face so full of hate, signors. In his eyes is murder.

"Soon a waiter he slip up beside me and drop in my lap a little paper. The paper you have there. The serpent sign; the warning," and the girl-wife ceased as Sergeant Walsh read the note of the fiddler:

"I have not forgotten the blow you gave me. You have had your warning from the sign of the serpent."

"Yes," said the detective, indicating that Rosa should proceed, which she did as her husband comforted her.

"I did not tell Salvatore, my beloved husband. I no want to deceive him, but I no want him killed, either. He's too dear to me, so I worry and no sleep at night, but I keep cheer for him. Then the other notes came; you have them all."

Walsh read the notes in order:

"The brotherhood of the Sign of the Serpent is poor, your husband is rich. He has been marked for death unless you pay the money. If you warn your husband or the police, both of you will pay the penalty of the——"

Then followed the sign and a postscript:

"You know the address. Be there with the money within ten days."

The next note read:

"There are but seven days more"—and the sign.

Another scrawl read:

"We are waiting. Don't think you can escape the sentence of the brotherhood."

Rosa resumed:

"When I recognized Rocco I know that he would stop at nothing, and out of fear for my husband's life I took Rocco the money, not all of it, but in such payments as I could raise without my husband knowing."

The husband interrupted:

"Through love of me and to protect me, my wife had been making these secret visits to that dog paying as she could. I knew something was wrong. One night I followed, and from a fire-escape I saw her stab Rocco."

"We'll forget the stabbing," assured Walsh, "but you'll have to appear in court, and you won't need these Bolsheviki love letters, so we'll just keep them."

With the other circumstantial evidence possessed by the agents of two governments, Walsh succeeded in convicting Rocco on a charge of killing Policeman Velotta—the one man who had seen the attack made by Rocco on Rosa in far-off Sicily, and had seen her repulse him.

Their home relieved of the menace of the Sign of the Serpent, Detective Walsh observed that the roses returned to Rosa's cheeks and comfort to her husband's heart.

Luck in Detecting Criminals

By CARL H. GETZ

FOR an even five months I tried to get an interview with a certain detective whose name is a by-word in international police and banking circles, but who is little known to the public because of the peculiar semi-official character of his work. Finally he agreed to have lunch with me and said he would answer any questions I cared to ask provided it was understood I was not to use his name. Of course I was disappointed, but I thought the opportunity to meet him and talk to him was too good to overlook. So at 1 o'clock we met. After we had given our order he asked me what I wanted to know.

"Just one question," I replied. "What is the best day's work you ever did?"

He laughed.

"You and other friends of mine write articles about the scientific detection of crime, and you write fiction in which the scientific and so-called psychological methods are used," he began. "I read those articles and stories with interest and, if you don't mind, with amusement. But to be honest with you, in all of my thirty years as a detective in this country and abroad I have never used any of the methods you describe, and I have never met such a detective as your principal characters usually are."

I hardly knew what to say. Then I asked him just how he accounted for his great success in tracking criminals.

"Luck," he answered, "just plain, ordinary garden variety of luck."

"I think you are too modest," I protested.

"Not a bit of it," he answered quickly. "You ask about my best day's work. I'll tell you about it. It will illustrate my point."

Then our food came and we were interrupted for a moment.

"For nearly four years I had been trying to trace three of the cleverest forgers and counterfeiters this country or any other country had ever known," he began. "All three men were expert engravers, and because of the persistent fight of the United States Secret Service operatives against counterfeiters we suspected that they were the men who had found profitable a new, nefarious business, the counterfeiting of checks, which is now commonly called modern counterfeiting.

"For months and months we tried to find some trace of these three men. All three had prison sentences, and all three were known to the police of nearly every city in the United States, but we couldn't learn anything definite about them. Every now and then we would be advised of some large bank loss as a result of counterfeit checks. And in every instance we were satisfied that these three men were guilty.

"Their plan of operation was to obtain sample checks of some big corporation or, more frequently, some big estate. Then they would have duplicate checks printed or lithographed. With these checks it was comparatively simple to pass forgeries because the banks all recognized the design of the checks.

"One day I came to New York for a conference with two other men who had been working on this case for more than a year. After working all morning we came to this very restaurant for lunch. We sat down over there," and he pointed to a table in the centre of the room. "We hadn't been seated but a moment when one of my friends grabbed me by the arm and whispered:

"'——, look over there in the corner.'

"There sat the three men we had been trying to get for more than three years. They were just finishing their lunch. We hadn't even ordered ours. We called our waiter, gave him a dollar bill, and said that

we had to leave unexpectedly for a few minutes. When the three men departed we left also. We followed them to a loft building on Barclay street, and then one of the officers of our party followed them into the building. He climbed two flights of stairs after the three men, and finally saw them enter a door on which was painted, 'Angell & Company, Printers.'

"Our friend soon returned and reported what he had seen. We sent him back to get estimates on letterheads and envelopes. When he entered he saw a well-equipped print shop that looked busy. There were several different kinds of presses, and all were in operation My friend got his prices, which were very low, and then returned to us. He reported that he had seen a good-looking print shop and that everything looked O. K.

"That afternoon we got a search warrant and that night broke into the place. We searched for more than an hour and could find nothing that would indicate the three men were doing anything other than an ordinary printing business. We opened everything, but found nothing incriminating. We were about to go and give it up for a bad job when I opened a typewriter desk. I saw nothing but a typewriter. Then luckily I pulled out the board on which the typewriter was attached, and there underneath I saw a copying glass and a beautiful copper engraving of a check. We opened the other typewriter desks, and under each typewriter board we found a plate and a glass. We soon found electric switches, which threw powerful lights up under the glass and made it possible to trace checks very easily.

"We replaced the typewriters, closed the desks and got everything in order before we left. The next morning the three men were arrested, later were tried and convicted, and to-day are serving time in a state's prison. When they get out after ten years they will face other charges which will keep them behind prison bars the rest of their lives.

"This is the way those men operated in New York. They had a staff of high-powered salesmen, who would solicit printing at any prices to get the work. The salesmen would explain that all they wanted was an opportunity to demonstrate what they could do. They would explain that the special prices would apply to the first job only. Most business men who were approached didn't need any printing at the moment, but letterheads and envelopes are always used, and so the order was given. The salesmen received fifty per cent. commission.

"The finished job was always delivered late in the afternoon by a boy. If an effort was made to pay the boy in cash he would explain that he wasn't allowed to accept cash. And so a check was sent a day or two later. The printing was of the highest quality, and frequently with the check went a request for prices on additional work.

"When the checks were received they were at once duplicated and put through the bank for payment. When the counterfeit check came back to its original owner he wouldn't detect the difference because he had written a check for that amount made payable to Angell & Company, and so in some cases he gave the check nothing more than a careless glance. If he did not detect the raise in the amount at once it remained unnoticed for a short time.

"The original check, raised from probably five or six dollars to five or six hundred, was sent to a neighboring city and cashed by a confederate, who moved from one city to another, using different names in each city. The name Angell & Company didn't appear on the check. The loser could never tell who had actually cashed the check, because when an effort to find the endorser was made it was learned that there was no such person. Also, the loser had no chance of holding the bank liable, because his signature was genuine.

"These three crooks told us after they had been convicted that they had made nearly $175,000 in five months. Inasmuch as they were all expert engravers, they had no difficulty in counterfeiting checks.

"Those three were the most dangerous men I ever trailed, because the losses of those they met were so great and because it was so very difficult to get conclusive evidence with which to convict. On top of that we lost all trace of them. And here

they were operating in the largest city in the United States. Then one day I stumbled onto them in a public restaurant. Now, there was nothing scientific about that. It was pure dumb luck. And that is the way I have done most of my best work."

I started to ask another question, but my friend the detective kept right on going.

"Why, take my friend, Sir Basil Thompson, former head of criminal investigation at Scotland Yard and Director of British Intelligence during the war," he said. "Does he read detective stories? Of course he does. Why? Because they amuse him. He is all the time running onto detectives in these stories such as he has never encountered in his own experience. And he gets a lot of fun out of it.

"Ask Sir Basil whether there is anything in this scientific detection of crime, and I'll wager he'll tell you that after you have eliminated the science of finger-printing and chemistry in analyzing stains, you haven't much left that is worth anything.

"Sir Basil holds that successful detection of crime is largely a matter of plain intelligence coupled with hard work and a lot of luck. And I agree with him."

Just then our waiter came with our check. As I paid for it my friend reached for his hat, coat and stick. A moment later we were out on the street together.

"Luck, my boy, just plain luck, is the way we get 'em," he said in parting.

But was he right?

Not long ago a mechanic was found dead in the city of Vienna. The wound in his head indicated that he had been killed with some blunt instrument. On the ground beside the body was found a cap. The detectives who arrived on the scene first saw to it that curiosity seekers should not approach the spot where the body was. The floor of the shop was carefully swept and the sweepings placed in a heavy brown paper bag. The cap was placed in a similar sack, and both cap and sweepings were taken to a police laboratory.

The bag containing the cap was beat with a big heavy stick and the dust that was removed was placed beneath a microscope. First, red hair was found. Further examination revealed that the man had had his hair cut recently, because one end of the hairs were cut at an angle. Next sawdust was found, which seemed to indicate that the murderer was a carpenter. Then bits of glue were found, which indicated further that he was a joiner.

Next the sweepings were analyzed. There were found small bits of white mud, which could have only come from a certain part of the city. The police went to that part of the city, went from one joiner to another, and finally found a red-headed man, whose hair had been cut recently. He was at once arrested and charged with the crime. He denied his guilt most vigorously and angrily, but when the evidence was placed before him he confessed.

Now the detection of the guilty party in that instance wasn't luck. It must be granted that at least some scientific effort was made.

European police insist that if care had been taken to keep curiosity seekers away from the place where the bodies of the clergyman and his favored choir singer were found in New Jersey—the Hall-Mills mystery—so that the chemist and the microscopist might have had an opportunity to examine and gather evidence, scientific methods could have been used to detect the guilty party. European police are always amazed when they learn how men and women in this country not identified with the police are permitted to wander all around a scene of a crime even before the police make their thorough examination. Such a proceeding is unheard of abroad.

Detectives for surety companies tell of instances of forgers who have obtained positions with their companies as forgery bond salesmen. As might be expected, these men prove expert salesmen.

In Europe these cases can be more than matched where internationally known criminals have succeeded in effecting a complete disguise, obtained positions on the police forces of some of the continental capitals, and succeeded in getting sent to the different schools of criminology. After they have learned all of the means known to the police for detecting crime they resign and then

set out to beat the system they have been taught.

Austria particularly has had some amazing experiences with criminals who have done this. In many instances these criminals have been caught because of information given the police by some woman.

One of the cleverest counterfeiters ever known in America practiced his nefarious business for fourteen years before he was finally caught. And then he was nabbed because of a tip given the police by a woman. United States Secret Service operatives suspected this man for a good many years, and time and time again entered his home with a search warrant, but never succeeded in finding any evidence to convict him.

Even after he was arrested his plates could not be found. Then he was given the opportunity of producing the plates and serving seven years or not producing them and serving seventeen years. He chose the shorter sentence and produced the plates. He had placed these plates against the backs of some wall pictures and then pasted heavy brown paper over them such as picture framers use. Operatives had searched behind the pictures, but never thought to examine the pictures themselves.

Despite the assertions of representatives of the old school of criminology, science is becoming more and more important in the detection of crime. And it will become increasingly so because the criminal ordinarily does not know how to combat scientific methods. The detective who uses scientific methods is fighting on a plane which the average criminal cannot be comprehended.

The radio is the latest scientific invention which has been enlisted in the war on crime. Already it has become quite common to broadcast descriptions of criminals wanted, and in Europe the police have perfected a method where finger-print descriptions can be sent by radio. Against such means the criminal hasn't a chance. And the old-time criminals who are watching sunsets through steel bars will testify to the truth of this.

BEGGING-LETTER TRICKS

THERE is no easier or more thriving criminal industry than the writing of begging letters.

There are scores of men and women who derive a substantial income by merely writing letters which wring tears and money from sympathetic and wholly unsuspicious victims.

These impostors prosper so well because very few people are deaf to the cry for aid, and even when they learn that they have been deliberatly swindled by cunning scoundrels they rarely care to prosecute.

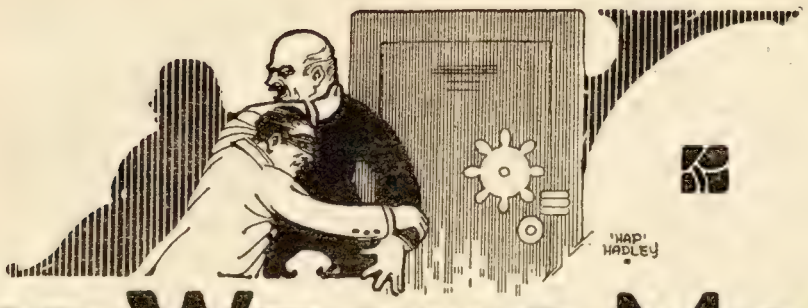
A few weeks ago a woman was arrested for being intoxicated, and she had in her possession 53 letters, all of which had contained money sent to her by kind-hearted but misguided people who believed her agonizing tale of woe. Not one of these folks would prosecute her for obtaining money by false pretenses.

Begging-letter writers conduct their business on strictly "professional" lines. They have a library of reference books, a stock of very cheap note paper, a carefully kept index and a file showing the particular kind of "bait" which is successful with their various clients.

Every one who is supposed to have money is regarded as a likely victim. These folks have even written to me!

All kinds of pitiful appeals are made. A wealthy woman who fails to respond to the cry of a consumptive husband may send a five-pound note to provide food for five (non-existent) starving babies.

One of the commonest forms of this barefaced swindling is for an impostor to claim friendship with a soldier or well-known public servant who has died abroad. The writer declares that years before he did a kindness to the dear man, and that now ill-luck has befallen him. Seldom is the appeal to the relatives made in vain.



THE WRONG MAN

by Frederick C. Davis

HENRY WALTERS nervously paced the length of his private office in the Northwest Tablet Company building. Twice he glanced sharply at the clock on his desk, which indicated seven-ten in the evening. Then he sat down and telephoned police headquarters.

"Hello, chief," he greeted that official after gaining connection. "This is Walters, Northwest Tablet Company—vice-president, you know. How about that detective you promised me? Our night watchman hasn't shown up yet, and I can't get connection with his home. I've got an unusually large amount of cash in the safe to-night, and I'm uneasy. The money came in too late for deposit in the bank."

A reply came over the wire.

"Officer Hugh Hanson left there a few minutes ago, did he?" asked Walters. "Thanks, chief. I waited after office hours to-night to warn the night watchman to be extra careful, but he didn't come, and if I hadn't stayed the whole factory would have been empty—nobody watching it. I hope Hanson hurries," he ended smilingly, "because the Misses is waiting dinner on me! Thanks again; good-by."

Walters impatiently glanced at his watch. He lighted a fresh cigar and strolled through the quiet office. Then he musingly contemplated the great black front of the company's safe and glanced at his watch again.

"Blast that night watchman!" he said to himself. "He ought to get fired for not showing up. And I hope Hanson hurries!"

He went into the outer office and became absorbed in a newspaper. Presently an odd noise made him look into the other office again, and to his astonishment he saw a masked man crouching before the safe turning the dial. An open window showed his manner of ingress.

"A thief!" gasped Walters.

He was a man of courage, for he rushed at the intruder and grappled him. But the newcomer struck him with a heavy cane he carried and the old gentleman sank unconscious to the floor. The crook dragged him to a closet, shoved him in, and closed the door. This had hardly been done when the emptiness and silence of the great office was disturbed by a thumping at the office entrance. The crook quickly took off his mask, toed down a short flight of steps, and stopped before the glass doors. He stared into the night at a form just outside and asked:

"Hanson?"

"No," the soft answer came; "this isn't Hanson. Are you Mr. Walters?"

"Yes, I am Walters. I thought you were Hanson."

"This is not Hanson—whoever *he* is."

"Then who are you? What do you want? The office closed two hours ago!"

"I know it. My name's Dillon," came muffled through the door. "Important matter; just came from the bank. The directors sent us with a message for you about to-morrow's payroll, Mr. Walters."

"Why didn't they telephone?" the crook demanded cautiously.

"Couldn't trust attempting it. Might leak out and start a run on the bank."

The man turned the key in the door and swung it open boldly. Two men entered. They paused inside, while he shut the door again.

"Is it as bad as that?" he asked to keep up the bluff so they would not suspect him of being there on nefarious business.

"We'd better go inside to talk it over, Mr. Walters."

The man whom we will now call Walters led the men up the short flight of steps and into the private office. In the brighter light he was better able to scan the faces of his visitors. The taller was stylishly dressed and evidently cultured. The other was garbed more carelessly, was short and stout, and displayed evidence of a day's beard on his chin.

"Well," the fake Walters asked, "what is it? What is the trouble?"

Dillon, the taller, slowly curled his lips in an unbecoming smirk.

"That stuff I told you about a message from the bank," he pronounced slowly, "was a lie."

"What?"

"I say I lied to you."

"You're not from the bank? Then, why—why—what's the meaning——"

"Shorty and I thought," Dillon pushed through thinned lips, "that you might open your safe and invite us to help ourselves."

The supposed Walters swayed backward under the dazing realization that here were two more crooks like himself. Then suddenly his hand darted toward a drawer of the desk, jerked it open, and——

"Better not!"

Looking up, he perceived a small, deadly black hole eyeing him from the end of an automatic which Dillon was leveling.

The fake Walters blinked furiously. Then in a burst of anger he slammed the drawer shut and braced himself.

"So you're thieves!" he snapped in tones of virtuous indignation.

"Oh, why be disagreeable about it?"

It was an unpleasant sensation to find these two crooks as anxious to get the contents of that safe as he was.

Acting quickly and angrily, he removed sundry currency from his pockets and his watch from his vest, placing them on the desk blotter before him, hoping this loot would satisfy the pair and cause them to depart.

"Help yourself," he mocked. "That safe is empty. There is my watch and seven dollars—all I have with me now. Take them and get out of here!"

Dillon bowed stiffly.

"Thank you for the small favor," he sneered, "but I will not believe that the safe is empty until you unlock it and show me. How do you feel about that, Shorty?"

"Gee, yes!" Shorty opined throatily.

The false Walters bored his eyes into those of this amazing burglar. His glance roved, and he saw that under the edge of a desk a push-button was located. He knew that this button when pressed rang a loud gong in the factory which, being audible above the rattle of the machinery, Walters used ordinarily to call the factory superintendent into the office. The factory was silent now, and the powerful hammer of the bell would surely send a surprisingly loud clang into the office if he pressed the button. Dillon alone was showing a gun; Shorty stood by like a leashed puppy waiting to get at a bone.

As though imploring, the fake Walters leaned forward, hands gripping the edge of the desk.

"You're bluffing!" he said, and as he spoke he pressed the push-button.

"I tell you——"

A loud, startling, echoing clatter came through the door to the right. Dillon started violently; the heads of both crooks jerked toward the sound. Instantly the pseudo Walters leaped forward. He swung around the desk and, as in one motion, delivered a powerful thrust with his knee into the pit of Shorty's stomach. At the same time he snatched the wrist of Dillon's hand which held the gun, thrust it downward, and swung a clenched fist at his chin.

The uppercut missed. Dillon swore hoarsely, whirled, struck out, stepped backward. Walters followed, his hand still clenching that wrist. They buckled together, fighting for possession of the gun. Up it darted; it swung out, whipped downward, disappeared between them. And then —the gun belched and spat red fire into the air, but made little noise, as it had been fixed with a silencer.

The man thought to be Walters stiffened as he felt the body of Dillon grow limp in his arms. Suddenly he tore himself away, panting, and with wide eyes saw Dillon fall to the floor and lay motionless, limp, inert.

From the quiet form on the floor he turned eyes to the smoking automatic in his hand. Back to the prostrate man his eyes shifted and widened with horror as he saw, directly above the location of Dillon's heart, a rapidly widening area of crimson!

He gasped inarticulately.

He was unaware that Shorty had recovered from the thrust in the stomach; he knew only that Dillon must have got hurt! Dillon must have got hurt somehow; there was blood——

"My God!" ran in his ears from the tight throat of Shorty. "My God! You went and killed him!"

Slowly, gradually the fake Walters's tense body relaxed, and he slumped to the edge of the desk, staring. He kept his round eyes on the still form on the floor. Shorty quickly stepped to the side of the prostrate Dillon, bent, and listened for any sound of a pumping heart. He straightened and with trembling fingers hunted for a pulse in Dillon's wrist. Then he raised one limp arm of the man on the floor, released it, and as it thumped heavily downward he shivered.

"My God!" Shorty exclaimed again. "You went and killed him!"

"Why did I pretend to be Walters?" the crook muttered, aghast. "Now I've got myself in a nice fix. And I heard Walters say over the phone that the detective was on his way here. I must hurry and get away from the yegg, but this shock has weakened me."

With a convulsive movement he dropped the automatic. Slowly, as though the strength of his limbs had gone from him, he rounded the desk and dropped into a chair. He slumped down and stared unseeingly at the thing on the floor as Shorty bent over Dillon and searched again for a pulse in the limp wrist.

The horror of being accused of murder was getting on his nerves.

With the suddenness of awakening from an unpleasant sleep he started up, rounded the desk again, grabbed up the automatic from the floor, and with slitted eyes leveled it at the straightening Shorty.

"Put your hands up!" he ordered sharply. His face was blankly white and fixed and his eyes burned into Shorty's with such a glare that that individual immediately obeyed his request.

"I killed that man in self-defense," he said slowly. "You know that."

Shorty scornfully curled his lips.

"Do I? Do I?" he jeered.

"I killed him in self-defense," the man repeated with growing calm. "Besides that, he is a burglar, and I was protecting the property of this company."

"You don't say!" Shorty mocked elaborately. "Who're you goin' to tell that to?"

"I shall tell it to the jury that tries you for burglary."

"Oh, you will, heh? How are you goin' to *prove* I'm a burglar? How are you goin' to prove *he* was a burglar? We didn't break into this office, did we? You let us in of your own accord. Then how——"

"You lied your way in here!"

"That's what *you'll* tell the jury! *I'll* tell 'em we didn't. I'll swear we didn't. I'll swear we saw you in here and wanted to

ask for a job; that you got scared and opened fire on us. Then which one will they be able to believe?"

"You both were burglars," reiterated the supposed Walters. "You came to rob the safe to-night!"

"That so? That so? We haven't robbed anybody, have we? We didn't even make a try to get into the safe, did we? You know that! There's no evidence against us on that score. You know we didn't break in here—we was let in; we didn't even try to open the safe nor nothin'. How're you goin' to prove we attempted to rob this place?"

"I'll testify that you did."

"And I'll testify that we *didn't!*"

The fake Walters stared fixedly at Shorty as the fleshy man's words percolated through his brain. Shorty perceived the impression he had made and he leaned forward, eyes shrewdly narrowed, voice hushed.

"Once," he whispered, "once I went to law school when I was a younger. And one thing that I learned was that when one man kills another man, no matter where or why—it's murder!"

"You——"

"Now, wait a minute! I saw you start the fight with my pal. You shot the bullet that killed him. Do you think that because you hide under the law's skirts that killin' a man ain't murder?"

Against his will the guilty eyes strayed to the form on the floor—limp, sprawling, its chest still, the area of crimson over the heart shining wetly around a frayed hole in the shirt.

"I——"

"*I'm* talkin'! It'll be nice and pleasant to have people point you out as a murderer, won't it? They'll tell about you killin' a man that didn't even threaten you! They'll put it in all the papers, and put your picture in, and everybody on God's green earth almost will know that you're a murderer, even if the law *is* with you!"

A cold chill went through the accused man when he thought of arrest.

How could he explain his presence there?

The shrill clamor of the telephone bell interrupted his thoughts. He stared at the instrument blankly, realized the import of the ring and, keeping wary eyes on Shorty, placed the receiver to his ear, while he strove to control himself.

"Hello?" he inquired with difficulty.

"That you, Henry? Are you coming home to supper?" a woman asked.

"Yes. I'll be home soon—little matter right now got to be attended to. Yes, keep the dinner hot. Good-by."

He straightened, a tightening in his throat, and again turned his reddening eyes toward the leering crook.

Shorty took an abrupt step forward, his eyes shrewd and narrow again.

"That was yer wife, wasn't it?"

"Yes," he stammered.

"Uh-huh. And what'll your wife think, findin' out she's married to a man that's killed somebody?"

"Stop it!" he gasped. "I'm going to beat it," and he moved toward the door.

But a menacing gun in Shorty's hand stopped him.

The impersonator was getting worried. At any moment Officer Hanson might appear, and if he knew Walters by sight he would know instantly that he was not the real Walters.

His mind was whirling with the dizziness of these quick events. His reasoning failed him. His eyes strayed to the limp, sprawling form on the floor and shut quickly. They quivered open again as his hand which held the gun slowly, weakly lowered.

Shorty dropped his arms and stepped forward, his voice hushed as he said:

"Say, I'm not crazy to be sent up again. The police know me, and they sure want me, too. I don't want to get sent up; and you, I guess, don't want everybody—yer wife and little kids—to know you killed a man, do you?"

"All I ask is to get out of here," groaned the other, bursting into a cold perspiration.

"Wait! Nobody else heard the shot," Shorty continued, "and nobody knows of it except you and me. Do you—do you get me?"

Dazedly the crook nodded.

"Do you know the combination of that safe?"

"It's open. I opened it when——"

"Is there—about—a thousand dollars in it?"

"Yes."

"Well, get it and give it to me. In the mornin' you can go to the bank and take a thousand from your own account and straighten up the balance before the cashier knows it. You gotta give me the money right now, though, and I'll carry *that* out—and get rid of it. And I'll keep dead mum. Nobody else'll know."

Walters's eyes stayed on the red, perspiring face of Shorty for a full moment. Once his glance began to slide automatically toward the form on the floor, but he checked the impulse and drew them back. Finally he arose rigidly and nodded.

"Very well," he said with what seemed another man's voice. "I'll do it."

"You got sense. You got sense. I'd've sent you up for life for killin' my pal if you refused."

Shorty's victim walked to the expanse of black steel which formed the front of the company's safe. With an effort he swung back the massive doors and walked into the yawning opening. He closed trembling fingers on a bundle of greenbacks and a book, and with them clenched in a white-knuckled hand swung the door shut and placed the money in the moist, trembling palm of Shorty.

"Get—get it out of here—as soon as you can," he managed to say, and strutted unbendingly toward the open window and stared out.

He was aware that behind him Shorty was making the exerting effort necessary to raising the weighty body of Dillon to his shoulder. He heard Shorty's heavy footsteps thump across the floor in the direction of the entrance. Against his own wish, he turned to behold the stocky man grotesquely carrying his limp burden on his shoulder like a roll of carpet.

Suddenly the hall door opened. Shorty stopped abruptly, staring straight ahead, and his companion took two involuntary steps forward in utter loss of self-control. And no wonder both stood paralyzed like two granite statues. For Detective Hugh Hanson was standing in the doorway and slowly waving a revolver at them!

The tense tableau lasted only a moment. Then Shorty allowed his burden to slide sprawlingly to the floor. The fake Walters stopped beside the desk, utterly unable to trust his eyes, yet cursing himself for not getting out of there before the officer's arrival, although he knew that Shorty would have shot him had he attempted to escape.

"Well!" Hugh Hanson said grimly.

"What—what——" the supposed Walters attempted to say.

"What am I doing here? You sent for me yourself to take the place of your regular night watchman," said the officer.

"But——" began the crook, taking hope now that the detective did not know Mr. Walters by sight.

"No 'buts' to it. I heard everything from outside this door. When I got here the entrance wasn't locked; it didn't catch the last time it was closed. About then I heard a muffled shot, so I decided to look around. Now I'm a witness, Walters, that you're guilty of murder, as well as being an accessory to a conspiracy to defeat the ends of justice!"

Fear clutched the trembling crook's heart again.

"Under the law," Hanson went on smoothly, "you would have been immune from punishment for killing this man. Now you've turned accessory against the state by trying to bribe that man, and whatever immunity you had is now gone. Do you know that?"

The supposed Walters could only stare.

"I've got you both dead to rights, haven't I?"

Hanson smiled grimly from Shorty to the other and stepped inward. "Oblige me," he addressed softly to Shorty, "by standing beside Mr. Walters."

Shorty, under the persuasion of a double-action revolver leveled at his abdomen, backed to a spot beside the other man.

Hanson supplemented a searching gaze with "Well, I guess this little comedy has gone about far enough, hasn't it? Mr. Walters, lift that telephone there, will you?"

Like an automaton, completely bewildered and dazed, he obeyed.

"Call headquarters. One-one-two-two."

The terrified man phonographically repeated the number to Central's query.

"Tell them to send two or three good men out here right away. And be careful about making the mistake of lowering that hook before you say it."

Like a man pronouncing his own death sentence, the impersonator conveyed to the desk sergeant at police headquarters the exact information Hanson desired; then he lowered the phone and straightened again.

"The sergeant says," he repeated miserably, "the men will be sent a-rushing."

"Sounds like the sergeant!" Hanson grinned.

"Might—might I go out to call my wife?" Walters ventured after a silent pause.

"No, you may not—yet. I've got something I want to show you first. Better pay pretty strict attention to what's going to happen, Mr. Walters."

Hanson backed away to the opposite wall, smiling queerly the while. Both crooks, puzzled, stood beside the desk, eyes onto the man in the corner. The still form of Dillon lay not ten feet from the door.

Over Shorty's face spread a pallor which was startling in contrast to the flush which had formerly suffused it as he realized what was coming.

"I see you're still playing the same old game, Carson," Hanson said, addressing the crook lying on the floor.

"I'm mighty glad to meet my old friend Stiff Carson again," Hanson added; then he roared: "How are you, Stiff?"

The supposed Walters gazed questioningly into the grimly humorous face of the detective, and Shorty's features worked hideously. Hanson's eyes were on the pale face of the man on the floor and he went on:

"Still working the old rubber ink-sac and the hole cut in the shirt front, aren't you, Stiff? Still cashing in on your strange ability to slow your heart action so it isn't hardly noticeable. You seem as expert as ever on the suppressed breathing part of it, too."

There was no reply, but the supposed corpse twitched.

"Come on, Stiff," the detective urged. "The gun I use I load with *real* bullets—not with blanks, as you do yours. I'll give you three counts to stand up."

Shorty crouched and the other man stared at the detective incredulously. The limp form on the floor lay motionless and sprawling as before.

"One!" said Hanson placidly.

A short pause.

"Two!"

No response, save a deadly stillness.

"At three," Hanson reminded the form on the floor, "I'll fire into your leg."

"Thr——"

A terrorized yell sounded. The supposedly dead man on the floor leaped up, gasping, backing fearfully away, and the fake Walters saw the action as one sees looming shapes in a dream—grotesque and haunting.

Then, to his bewildered consciousness, Hanson's voice penetrated again:

"Put these handcuffs on Stiff and Shorty, will you, Walters? Thank you. Now, you oblige me, Walters, by putting this other pair on yourself. You are not Mr. Walters, but his cashier, and I reckon you didn't come here to-night for any good purpose. Let me see that book you took out of the safe."

He grabbed it, and the cashier made a wild dash to escape, but a blow from the detective's fist knocked him senseless.

Just then a groan from the closet reached the detective's ears, and as he opened the door Mr. Walters reeled out. A few words from the detective explained matters.

"So my assailant was our cashier," gasped Walters, glaring down at his exposed employee.

"Here's a book he took from the safe," said Hanson, handing it over. "Looks suspicious."

Walters opened the book and studied it a few moments.

"He's been robbing us!" he exclaimed. "An auditor was coming to-morrow, and the cashier evidently wanted to get this book to doctor it and cover his defalcations."

"Well, he won't do it now. These other two crooks made a monkey of him. They're a clever pair of birds."

"How?"

"I dare say Stiff Carson has been 'killed' some twenty or thirty times in the last six months," Hanson explained. "Sometimes these crooks stage a fight over a poker game, and sometimes they work like this. They've even got away with it in a crowded office building. Carson always manages to get 'shot' with his own revolver, which is filled with blanks. Then he feigns death and squirts red ink over his shirt, through a previously cut hole, by pressing the rubber sac sewed inside. They seem to find it a profitable business, too. Each time Carson is 'killed' Shorty manages to pull a nice-sized wad from the 'murderer' in exchange for his silence. Which reminds me, Shorty, that stolen thousand!"

He took the money from the crook's pocket and handed it to Walters.

But Walters was in an ecstasy of relief and dropped the money on his desk. He took up the telephone, grinning absurdly. "I'm going to call my wife," he said, "and tell her I'm coming home to dinner right away."

"And after that," Hanson added, "I'll call headquarters again and tell them to send another man to take my place. I've chased these two birds for eight solid months, and I don't want to be playing night watchman when the time comes to put them into a cage with that crooked cashier of yours."

A BAD MONEY GANG

CHIEF MORAN of the Secret Service recently made public for the first time an official statement on the recent wholesale round-up of counterfeiters in New York.

The aggregate of the counterfeit money put in circulation by the New York gang will not exceed $50,000, it was said, and this has been accounted for already. Moran said:

"While the operations of this particular band of criminals have placed in circulation more counterfeit than is ordinarily circulated, the statements that $10,000,000, or even $1,000,000 in counterfeit is in circulation are ridiculous.

"The records of the Secret Service will prove that the aggregate of counterfeit money circulated in the United States for twenty years would not amount to $1,000,000. While annually there comes into the hands of the Secret Service anywhere from $200,000 to $500,000 in counterfeit money, there is less than $25,000 actually circulated in an average year.

"The facts are that in this case our agents after months of hard work, obtained sufficient evidence against a number of Italians located in New York, Brooklyn and Jersey towns to warrant arrests, and plans were completed for simultaneous raids, resulting in the arrest of 64 persons.

"Arrests made since bring the total up to about 70. All but 27 have been released, and these have been indicted and are held under heavy bond.

"In the raids $10,000 in counterfeit currency, thousands of counterfeit internal revenue strip stamps, withdrawal permits, postage stamps and the paraphernalia used in their manufacture were seized.

"Since the counterfeit notes made by this gang first appeared in circulation the Secret Service has been at work and from time to time in different parts of the country arrests have been made. Altogether the number may reach 100 and in the aggregate less than $50,000 of the counterfeit money has been put in circulation."

Japanese Courts

THE present judiciary and judicial system of Japan is the outgrowth of 45 years. The crude trials which prevailed during the days of Japanese feudalism have passed away. Torture is now entirely unknown, and hanging has taken the place of hari-kari, strangulation, crucifixion and decapitation in the administration of the death penalty. There is no more whipping of witnesses to make them testify. The French law has been as far as possible adapted to the Japanese want, and one of the supreme justices of Japan said that the Code Napoleon would be the law of the empire. The courts were established with the beginning of the new régime in the latter part of the sixties. Now Japan has more than one thousand lawyers, and it takes 1,500 judges to preside over her courts. She has 1,000 men who act as prosecuting attorneys and her judiciary department contains 1,700 clerks. The Minister of the Judiciary has a seat with the Secretary of State, the Secretary of the Interior, the Secretary of War and Navy and the Minister of Agriculture in the Cabinet of the Mikado, and the Department of Justice ranks next to those of the war and navy in the number of its employees. Its number of officials is as great as that of our Treasury at Washington and it has three courts to our one.

A call was made on the Acting Minister of Justice. The minister and the guide put hands on knees and doubled up in Japanese salutation. The minister chatted much more freely than does our own attorney-general. He talked of the improvements in the Japanese judiciary, and was very sanguine as to the future of his country.

The Japanese judges are required to dress in Prince Albert coats when on the bench. They do not look half as dignified as their clerks, who sometimes wear Japanese gowns, but the judges were thinking of adopting robes like those of the judges of England, and the Supreme Court laughed immoderately when told that our supreme judges at Washington were as careful of the cut of their gowns as a lady is of her dresses, and their eyes opened when told that the gowns cost $75 apiece.

A Japanese court-room, even now, is far different from an American one. Imagine a room half of which is made up of a wooden rostrum about three feet high and the other half floored with stone. Upon this rostrum the judges sit behind little tables, which are covered with green cloth. In the common pleas and the preliminary courts there are three of these tables. The judge sits at the centre one. At his right is the prosecutor or prosecuting attorney, and at his left is the clerk. All three have little paint boxes before them with brushes for writing in black the Japanese characters, and no stenographers are used. Close up to the rostrum, in the pit below, there is a low railing upon which the prisoner places his hands and looks up at the judge as he is tried. There are no seats for the lawyers, and lawyers are not allowed inside the bar. At the extreme back of the room one or two benches stand for the accommodation of visitors, and upon these sometimes sit prisoners waiting to be tried.

There is no jury and the judge examines the prisoner himself. The prosecutor states the case first, however, and the prisoners can employ counsel. A half-dozen offenders with handcuffs on their hands and with their arms tied together with ropes, which were also bound around their waists, were led by these ropes into the courts. The handcuffs were then taken off and laid with the ropes on the seats while the trial went on. The judge tried to get at the truth and the trial seemed to be fair.

When a man is arraigned by a policeman he is brought to a different court, and the judge looks into the evidence for himself. No lawyers are employed, and it is just a preliminary examination. There are a number of such courts, and they might rather be described as offices, for they consist of little cubby-holes made up of a rostrum and a pit. A boy of twelve was examined, who had been charged with arson. The judge put all kinds of searching questions to him and compared his answers with those he had given to the policeman. Among the evidences against the boy were a pair of sandals and a pair of Japanese stockings, which the boy said did not belong to him. The judge unrolled them, and taking them into his hand jumped down into the pit beside the boy and buckled them on the boy's feet with his own hands. He then further examined the boy and evidently thought him guilty. If he decided so, the boy would have to be tried in open court. If not he would be freed. The Japanese courts consist of the police court, of this preliminary examination, of the common pleas court, of courts of appeal, and of a supreme court. The court-rooms of these various courts are all about the same, and the trials seem to be more cross-examination by judges than by lawyers.

There are seven appeal courts in Japan, and each of these has from seven to eighteen judges. Each of the courts has its president, and all judges are appointed by the Mikado and for life. Judges of the police court get from $300 to $800 a year, and there is a branch of this court that deals with the infractions of police regulations, where the fines run from five cents to $1.95 each. Common pleas courts have jurisdiction of criminal and civil matters, and they receive from $900 to $3,000 a year. The appellate judges get from $3,500 to $4,000 a year, and the supreme judges receive from $4,000 to $5,000 a year. All of these amounts, however, must be reckoned in Japanese dollars, which are only worth about 75 cents. So that the five-thousand-dollar man does not get four thousand gold dollars and the four-thousand-dollar man gets about three.

The supreme court is composed of twenty judges, and these are divided into four classes of five judges each, so that four courts are kept going at the same time. Four of these judges could not speak a word of English. They all wore European dress, and in one of the reception-rooms of the supreme court chatted about Japan and its laws while we sipped little cups of tea out of egg-shell china and smoked cigarettes, which we lit in Japanese hibachis. One of the judges politely said that the Japanese believed more in the administration of justice than in fine buildings. They were very much interested in the supreme court at Washington, and were pleased with the fact that our judiciary was next to the president in rank. They were surprised that so many of our judges were old men, and said that the twenty judges of the Japanese supreme court ranged from forty to sixty years of age. Each of the great judges sucked in his breath and bowed as we separated.

It takes a great many clerks to run these Japanese courts, and the click of the typewriter is unheard in the clerical part of the building. Some of the clerks wear Japanese gowns and others dress in European clothes. They use paint brushes and black paint instead of pen and ink in their bookkeeping, and the documents of the court and the records are stored away in green oiled paper-covered baskets, so that they may be taken out quickly in case of fire. The clerks get from $12 to $75 a month and the prosecutors receive from $300 to $2,200 a year.

The policemen are paid from seven to fifteen Japanese dollars a month. Think of "the coppers of the Broadway squad" getting $5 (American) a month, or $1.25 a week, and board themselves! Still there are 5,000 policemen in Tokio and the great majority of them receive less than $2 a week. Their little Japanese forms are not half the size of those of our officials. They dress in white linen duck during the summer, and their natty clothes are of European cut. They wear caps instead of hats and carry long swords instead of short clubs. All of them are good swordsmen and the policemen have a drill of fencing,

and have to be proficient in the use of the foils before they can go on the force. When they arrest a man they tie him up with ropes as well as handcuff him, and instead of grabbing his shoulder and pushing him to the station they drag him along by the rope.

There are 30,000 of these policemen in Japan, and the Japanese police system is organized after that of France. It has a large detective force, and the spy system is such that the government is kept very well posted as to what is going on politically as well as criminally. The police stations are scattered all over Tokio, and at the corners of the principal streets you will see little booth-like sheds, in which one of these white-dressed officers sits. There are inspectors of police, constables, and a commissioner-in-chief. The latter receives about twenty-seven hundred American dollars per year, and the constables get from $12 to $14 per month.

DEVICES FOR SECRETING BOOTY

IT is a well-known fact that the big retail stores, especially those engaged in the dry goods, jewelry and fancy articles, are subjected to a heavy annual loss through the depredations of professional "shoplifters," as well as those well-connected individuals who are generally described as "kleptomaniacs" in the reports of the proceedings which are sometimes taken against them. The manager of a large department store smiled at the suggestion that the prevalence of this class of petty crime was somewhat exaggerated.

"Do you know," he said, "that our firm and most large establishments are put to the expense of maintaining a staff of detectives, both male and female, for the purpose of keeping a watchful eye upon these pests?

"I well remember a somewhat severe old lady who used to make trifling purchases here some years ago. She looked the acme of austere respectability with her black dress and the eyeglasses through which she would critically examine our goods. She used sometimes to buy small silver-mounted handbags and silver thimbles which she wanted to make presents of to her nieces.

"One day an awkward accident happened. While an assistant was showing her a case of rings, she unfortunately pushed against his arm, upset the case and caused the rings to fall to the floor. The old lady was profuse in her apologies, which, of course, we accepted, although when we picked up the rings and counted them one was missing, and the most rigorous search failed to discover its whereabouts.

"Four or five months afterward a similar accident occurred through the same old lady in my shop. I ordered her to be detained, and when she was searched it was discovered that she was wearing a boot having a piece of hard wax concealed under the arch of the instep, not quite touching the ground, but low enough to enable a ring or charm to adhere to it and so allow the thief to leave the place unsuspected.

"Muffs are useful articles to the shoplifters. Hooks are concealed in the fur, and a pocket is also ingeniously constructed. Armed with a muff of this description the wearer operates, without arousing the assistant's suspicion, among the articles which are displayed on a shop counter, and continues to annex a surprising quantity of property.

"A rather matronly-looking woman who once honored us with her patronage had an enormous pocket, almost the size of a small sack, constructed inside her skirt, which she reached through an opening concealed by a pleat.

"Then there was a smart, up-to-date young lady, who wore a sailor hat and blouse, with starched cuff and collar. Our assistant once heard a suspicious click, and it was discovered that her stiff cuffs were made with a kind of trap, which opened when pressed, and she was able to push small watches up her sleeves with little fear of detection."

The Secret of the Black Grip

By HAROLD F. PODHASKI

CHAPTER ONE

BRADFORD stopped for a moment at the end of the bridge, searched through the pockets of his ragged coat, and presently found the stub of a half-smoked cigarette. Striking a match, he leaned across the railing, sheltered its flame behind one of the steel girders of the bridge, and, lighting the cigarette, was about to pass on again when a casual glance at the huge stone pier just beneath him gave birth to an idea.

Bradford had been on his "uppers" now for several weeks, and lately, because he had lacked even the price of a bed in the cheapest of lodging houses, had been compelled to spend the most of his nights under the open sky in one of the parks. And the thought that occurred to him as he glanced at the pier below was that down there beneath the protecting shelter of the bridge would be a far better place for a night's repose.

He paused for a time, deliberating the matter, and finally deciding that in any event the idea was worth investigating, he climbed up over the iron railing and carefully lowered himself to the top of the pier. He stood there for a brief moment of indecision, then crawled forward on his hands and knees beneath the huge supporting beams that extended along the side of the bridge.

Underneath the shadows seemed to hang about him like a velvet curtain, but presently, when his eyes became more accustomed to the darkness, he saw that there was not only plenty of room to stand upright, but that he had indeed discovered a place of refuge that under the circumstances left little to be desired. Compared to a park bench on a cold October night, at any rate it was a veritable palace.

On either side of him the huge steel beams which supported the floor of the bridge extended but a foot or so above the pier and afforded ample protection against the chill October winds; at the rear a black wall of earth extended upward, evidently the base of the roadway at this end of the bridge; in front of him and some thirty feet below the white-churned waters of the river flew past with a ceaseless roar toward the brink of a fall some few yards beyond.

As he had eaten nothing since the early morning, when an odd job had netted him the price of a meal, Bradford had been conscious for hours of a gnawing emptiness inside of him that time was causing to become ever the more acute, and he sank down now upon the edge of the pier, where he sat for several moments, trying to formulate some sort of a plan whereby he could appease the insistent demands of that inner man. But no plan seemed to suggest itself, and finally deciding that he would go back to the city and trust to luck, he was just on the point of suiting the action to the thought when he suddenly became aware of some movement on the floor of the bridge, the pad of footsteps which came along for a few paces and then seemed to pause almost directly above him. Presuming that it was merely some passerby who had stopped for a moment to view the falls—a wonderful sight to behold in the autumn moonlight—he decided to wait until the other had passed on again before taking his departure. For a minute or two he sat there in the dark-

ness listening for the sound of retreating footsteps above him.

And then suddenly, happening to glance casually toward his right, through the open space beneath the low-hanging beam he caught sight of a dim, ghostly shadow, outlined by the moon in a blurred silhouette against the top of the pier, which extended for several feet beyond the edge of the bridge. And he saw by the shadow that the other was at that precise moment in the act of climbing over the railing, apparently with the intention of lowering himself onto the pier.

Mystified as to what the other's purpose could be, Bradford crawled quickly back into one of the darker corners, where he flattened himself against the earthen wall and awaited developments.

A moment later a head came into view beneath the beam, followed immediately by the body of a man as he crawled on all fours under the bridge. Standing upright then, he waited for a time until his eyes became more accustomed to the darkness, whereupon he strode across the pier to the wall of earth, only a few feet from the spot where Bradford crouched in the shadows watching his every movement. His manner was that of one who had come here with some very definite purpose in mind, for he quickly produced from one of his pockets a small electric flashlight, and pressing the button he leveled its rays against the black wall in front of him.

By craning his neck a trifle Bradford could see that the circle of light thus made disclosed to view a small hole of about eight or ten inches in diameter that had apparently been dug into the side of the wall. Into this aperture the man extended his arm its full length, and after feeling about for a moment or two he drew therefrom what the mystified watcher in the opposite corner took to be a small black grip. Setting this grip carefully down upon the floor of the pier at his feet, he knelt down beside it, and holding the light with one hand, he started to unbuckle the straps with the other.

Scarcely daring to breathe lest the man became aware of his presence so close at hand, Bradford crept farther back into his corner and stood there watching him, conscious of more than a mild curiosity as to the purpose of his mysterious behavior. Perhaps, he thought, the contents of the grip would offer some sort of a solution.

But Bradford was not as yet to learn the contents of that grip, for Fate, having shuffled the cards and dealt them according to its liking, proceeded to take the situation in hand.

The desire to sneeze, as doubtless you are aware, sometimes becomes an overmastering emotion that by no effort of the will can one suppress. And Bradford, becoming suddenly afflicted with such a desire, after a herculean effort to stifle it finally gave way to the inclination. He could have done nothing else, in fact, had his very life depended upon it. And instantly, of course, that sneeze revealed his presence to the other man kneeling upon the pier near by.

Startled by the unexpectedness of it, he sprang to his feet, and dropping the light, he stood there for a brief moment in the darkness, staring hard toward the spot from which the sound of that sneeze had emanated. Then, quickly recovering himself, he made a sudden dash toward the corner, and before Bradford had the time to even realize the man's murderous intention, he found himself forced to the very edge of the pier, fighting with a desperate determination to keep from being hurled over the brink into the seething torrent below.

The thing had happened so suddenly, was so utterly unexpected, that for the first few moments the encounter proved to be an entirely one-sided affair. Such an attack as this was the last thing in the world Bradford had looked for when that unfortunate sneeze had revealed his presence, and as a result the other had taken him at a decided disadvantage.

A few months before Bradford would have been able to give the average man a good account of himself in a hand-to-hand fight, but the weeks of privation he had lately suffered had sapped him of a large measure of his physical strength and vitality, and it shortly became but a matter of moments before his mysterious assailant would likely succeed in his murderous pur-

pose, which was apparently to consign him to the tender mercies of the river flying past below.

But the thought of death down there in that raging torrent was far from pleasant to dwell upon, and by an almost superhuman effort Bradford managed at last to fight his way slowly back from the edge of the pier.

Then for several moments the two men struggled back and forth across the pier, breathlessly intent; the one battling grimly for self-preservation, the other seemingly with the lust to kill.

And finally the thing came to an end quite as suddenly and as unexpectedly as it had begun.

Bradford, finding himself forced again close to the edge, in a supreme effort to save himself twisted sharply about and thus succeeded in momentarily shaking off the other's grip. But almost instantly the man was upon him again, and only by a desperate lurch to one side did he manage to dodge the blow that was aimed at his head—a blow that would have doubtless sent him reeling over the brink had it landed. And, strangely enough, the failure of the blow to find its intended mark proved the other's undoing. For the force behind it carried him to the very edge of the pier, where he stood swaying back and forth for a brief moment, wildly swinging his arms in a frenzied effort to regain his balance. But the fates ruled against him, for the next instant he disappeared from view as his body went hurtling through space toward the dark waters.

Bradford, wheeling quickly about to again take the defensive, was just in time to see the man as he toppled over the edge. As he peered down through the dim and murky gloom he heard the splash above the roar of the torrent as the body of his luckless assailant plunged into the river, and a moment later saw his white, terrified face as he came to the surface several feet below the bridge. Then he disappeared from view again as the white-churned waters swept him onward toward the cataract's edge and the certain death that must surely await him on the jagged rocks.

With a little shiver at the thought of how nearly he himself had come to suffering that same fate, Bradford crept farther back onto the pier, where he stretched himself out on the hard, stone surface for a few moments' rest, utterly exhausted as a result of his trying experience. But presently the gnawing hunger inside of him overcame even his desire for rest, and he got up again, intending to carry out his original purpose of returning to the city in the hope that something might turn up whereby he could appease his hunger's demands.

As he took a step forward, however, his foot came suddenly in contact with the black grip which was still lying there upon the floor of the pier, and which he had entirely forgotten in the exciting events of the past few moments.

Kneeling down on the pier beside it, he felt about until he had presently located the flashlight. Pressing the switch, he leveled the white circle of light on the grip in front of him and began quickly to unbuckle the single remaining strap that still held it shut.

Finishing the task, he fingered for a moment or two with the catch, and presently finding the spring, he succeeded in getting the thing open.

What he saw as the light revealed the contents of the black grip to his view was startling indeed, and he knelt there beside it for several moments, silent, motionless, staring with unbelieving eyes.

Finally, absolutely and firmly convinced that either his sense of sight had played him some remarkable trick, or that he was the victim of some particularly lucid dream, he extinguished the light and sat down in the darkness upon the hard surface of the pier.

He was expecting to wake up at almost any minute to find it is suchthings that dreams are made out of.

No, he had certainly not been dreaming, nor had his sense of sight played him false. There was no question of doubt about the reality of what he saw.

The black grip was crammed literally to overflowing with neatly bound bundles of green- and yellow-backed currency.

CHAPTER TWO

STARTLED by the astonishing nature of this revelation, Bradford sat silent upon the pier for several moments of deliberation, his brain in a turmoil of conflicting emotions.

His need of this money—or some part of it at least—was a sore one indeed, and yet he knew full well that he had no right whatever to make use of even a penny of it. On the other hand, when he thought of the weeks of privation he had gone through of late, the temptation to do so was very great.

His mind traveled back along those dreary avenues, the memory of it all unfolded before his eyes like a vivid panorama, and some freakish thought seemed strangely to plead justification of the act should he give way to that temptation and make use of this money he so sorely needed. A freakish thought, true, but one we should not be too hasty to condemn. The one thing we must remember is that for many heart-breaking weeks Bradford had tasted only of the dregs of life, and you cannot realize what that sort of a hell may do to a man until you have gone through something like it yourself. And yet, because the man was inherently honest, his own duty seemed very clear before him. Every impulse of honesty and decency within him urged that he immediately turn this money over to the proper authorities and tell them the remarkable story of how it had come into his possession.

His own theory regarding it was that the money likely represented stolen property; that for some reason or other it had then been concealed here beneath the bridge, and that he himself had accidentally stumbled upon its hiding-place at what might well be termed the "psychological" moment, when the thief, evidently considering the coast clear, had come to regain possession of his ill-gotten booty. The theory seemed all the more reasonable when he considered the fact that the money was in the shape of neatly bound bundles; this, he thought, would further indicate that a bank robbery was likely at the root of it, for he knew that banks were accustomed to binding money up in bundles in that manner.

He was conscious, too, of a consuming curiosity as to just how much money the grip might contain. Doubtless many thousands of dollars, for the packages were not only very compact, but the grip seemed to be crammed full of them to its utmost capacity. Ten thousand dollars surely at the very least! Perhaps twenty. Good Lord! What a fortune for one man to possess! And only a few minutes before he had been wondering where he could scrape up the price of a cup of coffee. Well, he'd stake himself to a cup of coffee out of it if nothing else. He'd certainly earned it, too, no question about that, and come pretty close to cashing in his checks while he was about it. Not a pleasant thought to dwell upon either—death down there in the white-churned waters of that seething torrent. He stifled it with a little shiver, and picking up the flashlight again, he pressed the switch and leveled its rays upon the compact bundles of currency in front of him. It would, he thought, be rather interesting to know just how large a fortune he was lugging through the streets. Ten thousand dollars surely, or maybe twenty.

He began rapidly to remove the packages from the grip, piling them carefully on the pier beside him and counting the money as he did so. Before he was half through with the job it became apparent that there was going to be a considerably larger amount than he had first thought.

The smallest denomination of any of the bills was twenty dollars, and there was only one thick bundle of these. It contained apparently fifty bills of this denomination, for across the paper binding used to hold them together was written in red ink the amount he presumed the package to contain—$1,000. Each of the bundles was thus bound and labeled in fact, and it was an easy matter therefore to count the money. The next largest denomination was fifty dollars, and there were two packages of these, each marked $1,500. Then there were six bundles of one-hundred-dollar bills containing $2,000 each, and last, but by no means least, three packages of one thou-

sand-dollar bills, each labeled in bold red ink—$5,000.

This, as Bradford figured it out, brought the total to an even $31,000 contained in the twelve neatly bound bundles of currency that the black grip contained. Thirty-one thousand dollars! Truly a staggering sum to a chap like Bradford, who could not recall that he had ever possessed more than fifty dollars at one time in his life. A man with thirty-one thousand dollars needn't worry much about the future.

A careful search of the grip shortly convinced him that there was nothing else to be found inside of it save the money; nothing at least by which he could establish the identity of the rightful owner, of the bank from which he was now certain it must have been stolen. He was not, to be quite truthful about it, exactly disappointed. He was rather inclined to believe that in the end he was going to confiscate some of this money at least for his own use, and it would salve his conscience if he did not know to whom it belonged. Of course there would doubtless be something about it in the newspapers, but if one didn't read the newspapers——

The question that was now uppermost in Bradford's mind was just what to do with this money, and it was a question that found him in somewhat of a quandary. Should he carry it to the nearest police station and there tell his story? Or should he guide his course upon the theory that finders were keepers? Of course, if it had been only a small sum—say fifty dollars or so—there would have been no trouble whatever about it. He would have converted it to his own use and his conscience would have given him very slight concern. But thirty-one thousand dollars——

He pondered the problem seriously for several moments, until he suddenly became conscious of the fact that he had not as yet relieved that gnawing emptiness inside of him. In the exciting events of the past few moments he had entirely forgotten his hunger.

It was not, however, without a slight qualm of conscience of which he was very distinctly aware, that he drew forth one of the twenty-dollar bills and slipped it into his coat pocket. He hesitated a moment, seemed on the point of closing the grip, then changed his mind. Another brief moment's hesitation and he extracted four more of the twenty-dollar bills, and they joined the first in the same pocket.

Whereupon he shut the grip and bound it carefully up again with the straps. He wanted to take no chances of its coming suddenly open and spilling its contents in the street. He smiled at the thought. Such an accident would surely create something of a sensation, if not an actual riot.

Slipping the handle of the grip through his arm so that there would be no possibility of his dropping the precious thing into the river below, he extinguished the flashlight and crawled out along the pier until he had passed beneath the low-hanging beam at his left. Standing upright then, he peered cautiously along the bridge in both directions, and noting that the way was clear, he climbed up over the railing as quickly as seemed consistent with safety. A moment later he was making his way with long, rapid strides toward the glowing lights of the city a mile or so beyond, where further strange adventures lay in store for him.

CHAPTER THREE

A BRISK walk of twenty minutes brought Bradford to the business part of the city, and he bent his steps at once toward a small, cheap restaurant on one of the side streets, where the management, he knew, was not particular as to the personal appearance of its patrons. For Bradford's clothes were ragged, his face dirty and unshaven, his whole bearing suggestive of the typical vagabond.

The night as yet was comparatively young. The downtown theatres were just beginning to open their doors for the evening performances, and the pavements were stirring with life as endless streams of people hurried this way and that. But a ragged vagabond lugging a small black grip

was not apparently a sufficiently extraordinary sight to attract undue interest, and no one paid Bradford the slightest attention as he made his way along the crowded streets. Yet the man himself was so conscious of the remarkable burden he carried that his imagination seemed to play him scurvy tricks. It seemed to him that every person he passed stared at him with interest, curiously regarded the black grip, and twice when he passed blue-clad patrolmen leisurely strolling their beats he was absolutely certain they were about to stop him. But nothing of the kind happened, and he arrived finally at his destination without mishap. Of course, had the passers by known that inside the black grip this ragged vagabond carried more than $30,000 in United States currency—but we are dealing in actualities so we will not pause for conjecture.

Once inside the restaurant he sat down before one of the greasy tables and gave his order to an equally greasy-looking waitress.

The precious grip he placed upon the floor between his legs, both his ankles pressing firmly against the sides of it.

When he had finished eating he remained at the table for several moments, pondering again over the question of what to do. But still he found himself unable to reach any definite decision.

He knew precisely what he *ought* to do all right, what honesty and decency demanded, but ever before him was that vivid panorama, the heart-breaking memory of those days and nights of misery, those hopeless days and nights of the hell he had gone through. Death in that turgid river was preferable to going through it again. Had not Fate mocked him long enough? Surely it had. And now that unexpected fortune had befallen him——

Why not just keep this money and be done with it? Not a soul in the world was aware that he had it, no one would ever be the wiser if he kept it. The thief who had concealed it beneath the bridge, whose hiding-place he had accidentally stumbled upon —well, there would hardly be any trouble on that score. The river doubtless had finished him, and if not the river those jagged rocks down there below the falls.

Thirty-one thousand dollars! Lord, what a pile of money! And what a great deal of explaining it would necessitate if it were ever found in his possession; still he had a plan whereby he believed he could handle that end of it without difficulty.

He would buy a new outfit from head to foot, get a bath and shave of course, and in a day or two rent bachelor quarters in the better part of the city, and perhaps buy an expensive diamond ring to add the aspect of affluence to his person. Naturally he couldn't carry this money around with him; such a course would be both risky and unnecessary. He would open a checking account of say a thousand dollars or so in some bank for his temporary use and three or four savings accounts of perhaps a couple thousand each in other banks; a safety-deposit box then for the rest of it, and from time to time he could add a few hundreds onto his savings accounts or onto the checking account. In this way the matter could be handled without trouble, and there would be no possibility of any one suspecting that everything was not as it should be. People would take him for an ordinary man of affairs, and no one would inquire after the source of his income. Yes, without doubt, it would be dead easy to get away with it.

And yet there would always be his own conscience to trouble him. On that score Bradford cherished no doubts whatever. He was not perhaps such a model as mothers might select for their young hopefuls, but he was inherently honest to the very core; equally as honest with himself as he was with the rest of the world. And to make use of this money which did not belong to him, which he knew full well he had no right to use, would not be an act that would rest well upon his conscience.

And then, while he was considering the matter from this angle, another idea occurred to him. Two hundred dollars would be enough to put him on his feet again; with that much money he could still buy himself the outfit, get a decent place to live, and doubtless have enough left over to keep him in comparative comfort for three or

four weeks. In the meantime he could be looking around for a job, and no doubt before the money gave out he would have found something. They could say what they pleased about clothes not making the man; they did have a whole lot to do with the way a fellow got along in the world. It was certainly no use of a chap hunting a decent job when he looked like a tramp; Bradford had found this out to his sorrow.

Yes, it would probably take about two hundred dollars to see him through. Well, why not, then, just borrow that much out of the thirty-one thousand, and when he got straightened out again pay it back? For one thing his conscience would not bother him because his intentions were strictly honest; he really meant to pay the money back at the very first opportunity. Until he did pay it back he'd just keep the whole of it, and when the thirty-one thousand was once more intact—oh, well, no need of crossing that bridge until he came to it.

His decision made, he called for his bill, and pausing at the cashier's desk near the entrance, he presented one of his "borrowed" banknotes in payment therefor. The class of patronage to which this particular restaurant catered had little in common with twenty-dollar bills, and the tired-looking blonde behind the desk eyed the one Bradford had offered her with some little doubt. But as there appeared to be nothing wrong with it she finally stowed it away in the register and counted out the change.

Three or four doors further up the street Bradford stopped in front of a second-hand clothing store, his attention attracted by a blue serge suit in one of the windows that appeared to be about his size. By casual inspection it seemed also to be almost as good as new, and noting that the store was open, he wandered leisurely inside.

From the slick-looking gentleman who came forward to tender his wants he inquired after the suit, and was informed that it was a bargain at fifty dollars, but that he could have it for thirteen. He tried it on, found that it fit him as though built to his form, and promptly planked down the money. Noting that the store also carried a general line of haberdashery, he spent the next few minutes completing his wardrobe, and when he finally left the store he was entirely reclothed from hat to shoes.

His next stop was an all-night barber shop in the block above, and here he went just as thoroughly through the program of rejuvenation as he had at the clothing store. A bath, a haircut, a shampoo and a shave, a shine and even a manicure, were included in that program.

When he left the shop some time later no one could possibly have recognized in the good-looking, well-dressed, well-groomed young man the dirty, ragged vagabond who had gone into the cheap restaurant further down the street some two hours before.

CHAPTER FOUR

IT was at some nameless hour in the middle of the night when Bradford awoke suddenly, at first so perplexed by the strangeness of his surroundings that he was inclined to the belief he must be the victim of some particularly lucid dream. The moonlight, finding its way through the two large windows at his left, fell in a lustrous streak across the covers at the foot of his bed. It was a real bed, too, with clean white sheets, a large, attractive room, well furnished.

He sat up in bed, staring about uncertainly, the sleep still heavy in his eyes. It was a moment or two before the events of the night before recurred to him, but when they did the memory of that whole remarkable adventure swept through his mind with an unusual clarity that permitted of no belief in its unreality. He remembered very distinctly everything that had happened:

The fight beneath the bridge with his mysterious assailant, the small black grip, the thirty-one thousand dollars in green- and yellow-backed bills that it contained, the change it had wrought in him, the transformation from a ragged, penniless vagabond to a well-dressed man of affairs. Truly Aladdin and his wonderful lamp had nothing on him. And then, after the change had been brought about, he had rented a

room in one of the downtown hotels, had tasted the luxury of a real bed for the first time in many weeks. This, of course, was the room.

"Yes, it was all very real; no doubt whatever about that. A penniless vagabond yesterday lacking even the price of a square meal; a man of affairs to-day with more than thirty thousand dollars in his possession in the currency of the land. He felt under his pillow to make sure of it, ran his fingers over the bulging leather of the black grip, felt the shape of the tightly bound stacks of money beneath.

Finally he laid down again, closed his eyes and tried to sleep. But for some reason or other the sleep failed to come. He found it difficult even to keep his eyes shut; always they seemed to keep coming open as though actuated by hidden springs. Strange, too, for he was utterly tired out, very much in want of sleep. He lay there for several moments, staring at the ceiling, wondering at the cause of it. He wondered, too, what could have awakened him in the first place, for he was ordinarily a very sound sleeper. The excitement perhaps of the strange train of events of the night before, then the reaction. When one has many things upon one's mind it is always difficult to sleep. And still——

Then suddenly he sat up in bed again, listening intently, his attention attracted by a faint grating sound, a sound, it seemed, such as might be made by the gentle contact of metals, the scraping of one metal against another. For some moments he had been vaguely conscious of that sound, but thinking it to be nothing more startling than a rat gnawing at the woodwork, had paid it no attention. But now it came to him suddenly that it was not such a sound at all, and he sat there for a brief moment trying to locate its source. It seemed to come from the direction of the door, and the instant he made that discovery he understood precisely what was happening, understood exactly what was causing that faint grating sound.

Without a question of doubt some one was busily engaged in the corridor outside trying to pick the lock of his door.

Mystified, he crept softly out of bed and tiptoed across the room, knelt down beside the door and peered through the keyhole. A shaded light apparently was burning somewhere along the hallway outside, and by its dim glow he could see that whoever was trying to get into the room was using a short length of wire in his efforts to manipulate the lock. It was this that made the grating sound that had first attracted his attention.

Presently, as he watched, the other removed the wire, and as he was kneeling on the floor directly in front of the keyhole, Bradford caught a fleeting glimpse of his profile as he turned toward the light. What he saw left the immediate impression upon him that the man was some one he knew, some one with whom he had once come in contact in his everyday life; more than that —a man whom he had seen but recently, but a few hours before. It was strange indeed that a brief glimpse of his face should leave such a distinct impression upon him, for in his recent life Bradford had come in contact with no one whom he had learned to know as well as he seemed to know this man. Equally as strange that he should find it impossible to place him, and yet, try as he would, he could not recall exactly where and when he had seen that face before, could not for the life of him establish in his mind this man's identity.

All this flashed through Bradford's mind within the space of a brief moment or two, and then was as quickly forgotten when he heard again the sound of the wire grating in the lock as the man outside once more bent himself to his task, all unconscious of the fact that the occupant of the room was kneeling on the floor directly beyond the door, hardly more than a foot or two away.

Bradford was no coward, and yet he cherished no desire to chance combat with this midnight marauder, who would doubtless not hesitate to shoot if his safety demanded so drastic a course. Twenty-four hours before it had seemed to him that he was playing a part in a useless scheme of existence and he would not have cared very much what happened; he had, in fact, even seriously considered ending it all beneath the turgid waters of that swiftly flowing

river. But now that life had become worth the living again, he wanted to enjoy it as long as possible. He decided therefore merely to let the man outside know that he was aware of his presence, presuming that this would doubtless be enough to scare him away.

But as the gods of fate would have it Bradford was given no chance to suit the action to his thought, for just as he was on the point of starting across the room to switch on the lights he heard the snap of the lock and realized that the man in the corridor without had finally succeeded in his efforts to open the door. This caused him to suddenly change his plans, for the light switch was at least five or six steps away, and before he would be able to reach it he knew that the other would doubtless be inside. Therefore, he stepped quickly back behind the door again and, every nerve atingle, poised ready for instant action, he awaited developments.

Almost immediately the knob began to turn softly, slowly, and an instant later the door was pushed open until the aperture was wide enough to permit the passage of a man's body. Through this crack the other edged his way into the room, luckily turning to close the door again in such a way that his back was directly toward Bradford. There could hardly have been more than a foot of space between them, and for a brief instant Bradford considered taking his chances in personal combat, trusting to the advantage of a surprise attack to turn the odds in his favor. Doubtless if he had not been in bare feet and pajamas he would have carried this thought into action without further ado, but he hesitated to do so on that account. And in that instant of hesitation something he saw in the moonlight gave birth to a better idea.

What he saw was the black butt of a large automatic revolver protruding several inches from one of the hip pockets of the man in front of him.

What Bradford did then was done quickly and upon the spur of the moment. He could not have carried it off any more successfully had he rehearsed this very part a hundred times.

He merely reached forward, grasped firmly the butt of the automatic, and the next instant had jerked it out of the man's pocket. Quickly then he stepped back a pace, and when the startled marauder faced about it was to find himself staring into the black-mouthed muzzle of his own revolver.

(*To be continued in next week's issue*)

STONE IDOL IN NEGRO CABIN

THAT part of Texas once was peopled by a race of idol worshippers is indicated by the bringing to light recently of an image which is believed to be hundreds and perhaps thousands of years old. It is made of stone and was found in the cabin of a negro who lives in Colorado, Tex. This old negro is ninety-eight years old and has lived here since the town of Colorado was founded, forty-two years ago.

The stone image, representing the bust of a human being, was found in the home of the negro by J. L. Costin, Colorado broker. Mr. Costin noticed the image near the door of the cabin and asked where it came from.

"That is one of the dearest treasures me and Mary have," the negro answered. "Forty years ago Mary and me were married here, and a short time after I was out in the N. T. Smith pasture where a white man was digging a well. The white man dug up that image and gave it to me. It has been in our home ever since."

Thus it developed that the idol had been in Colorado for almost a half century, although very few citizens knew of its existence. It was found several feet below the surface of the earth, the negro declared.

The idol, which is hewn out of granite, weighs nineteen and one-half pounds. The eyes, nose, mouth, ears and other facial features are perfect. It shows the marks of age. There is no granite in this section of the State, in so far as can be learned.

Women Detectives

THE female detective is an important factor in many cases where domestic happiness is at stake, and is often employed where a man would be able to get little or nothing in the way of information. Detective agencies here, as well as in most of the larger cities of the country, employ female operatives for a certain line of business, though as a rule women do not make a success in this most peculiar of all occupations.

There is always work for women in the detective business, but there are comparatively few who care to make it a regular calling. Women are very useful in some classes of cases, and one who has real detective ability is useful in working up evidence. In divorce cases they obtain information men cannot get, and they can usually get it easily. Matrimonial troubles furnish the greater portion of the work which comes to private female detectives, naturally enough, and when a man wants his wife watched, and applies to a private agency to have this done, a woman is put upon the case. She can watch another woman successfully, and without alarming the party who is being shadowed.

Chicago has many female detectives, but they are not known as such. Their identity is successfully concealed. The woman who hires as a nursemaid or a skilled nurse may be a female "shadow." She is vigilant, watchful, alert and keen, and has every opportunity to ply her trade. She may come with the best of recommendations, and repay the confidence reposed in her by laying open to the world the secrets of the household of her master. The female detective is not sentimental at all. She gathers her information as coolly and deliberately as a farmer picking his apples in the orchard, and should disgrace and death follow as a consequence of exposure it is nothing to her. She is getting money for her labor, and that is all she cares for.

The female detective rarely if ever appears in the courts. Her evidence is carefully collected and then corroboration secured before the case is brought to trial. There are so few female detectives that it would not do for them to become known. Their occupation would be gone, and it would be a difficult matter for their employers to fill their places.

The queen of the female detectives in Chicago is a motherly woman, perhaps fifty years of age. She lives in a quiet locality on the west side and is much respected by her neighbors. She is of large and comfortable build, of dignified mien and combs her white hair over her forehead in the style of many years ago. Her smooth, white skin is unwrinkled and shows no traces of trouble or care. Her keen, steel gray eyes are hidden behind spectacles which give her a benevolent look, and altogether her appearance is that of a staid matron.

Has she a heart? Well, perhaps. No one knows. She will not tell. She has been a private detective for eighteen years and has had experience in every great city in the country, from New York to San Francisco. She has seen much misery and doubtless has caused much, but she keeps these things to herself.

"I have lived out," she said, in beginning her story, "as a domestic just to get into a house and see what took place there and who called in the absence of the husband. For the same purpose I have acted as a strolling fortune-teller and as a book agent and a peddler of patterns. No one can have any idea how many cases there are of domestic misery, and how much deception and misery there is in the world, and generally what is termed the fashionable world.

Women will suffer every imaginable indignity and insult rather than let the facts be known, for exposure means almost invariably the loss of social position—dearer to most women than life itself. There are many divorce cases reported in the papers, but there are many more which never come to light and of which the public never hears.

"There is a wrong impression regarding female detectives. They are accused of being blackmailers and adventuresses, but in the main this is not so. The work is too hard and the pay too small to attract the adventuresses, though I have known of cases where female 'shadows' have successfully blackmailed their victims.

"Some years ago I was retained in a queer case in San Francisco. The principal figure was a Mr. Allen, a rich old man, who was the president of a benevolent society there. He was charged by a young girl named Rosa Marlhouse with having struck her. Rosa was a beautiful girl, seventeen years of age, but she was a devil at heart and told her story in the most convincing way imaginable. Her mother had been married several times and had several children, Rosa being the youngest.

"When Rosa called on Mr. Allen soliciting aid he was struck by her artless story and innocent appearance and sent provisions to her house. She called on him after that and told him she had a talent for portrait work, and if she could get instruction she might do something toward the support of the family. Mr. Allen made arrangements to have her taught. One day Rosa visited the house when Mr. Allen was alone, the family being absent, and when she returned home she told her mother that she and Allen quarreled and that he struck her, and Mrs. Nathan at once swore out a warrant. There was great excitement, and the papers denounced Mr. Allen bitterly. I was put on the case, secured a room in the house, which was for rent, and became intimate with the family. I found that one of Rosa's brothers had secured a large sum of money from Mr. Allen by putting a pistol to his head, and had gone to Los Angeles. I had him brought back a prisoner, afterward secured a confession from Rosa that her mother had put up the job and fled the city. Rosa had secured one of Mr. Allen's pictures by telling him she wanted to paint it, and had stolen his spectacles and handkerchief, to be used as evidence against him.

"A short time ago I was called to a house on Curtis street in Chicago. A middle-aged woman, elegantly dressed and of apparent refinement, told me her husband, a professional man, with an office in a downtown block, had neglected her for a pretty artist, whose studio was in the same building. I found out afterward that the couple were not married nor had the doctor ever pretended to make love to her, much less marry her. Her claim therefore that she was married to him aroused my curiosity. She said she was married to the doctor, but was separated from him, and having learned that a pretty female artist was vamping him, she wanted me to stop it before he fell completely into her clutches. If he did, the lady declared that all hope of a reconciliation would be at an end. She added that she had been watching him and gave me a number of facts she had witnessed, relating to the doctor's attentions to the pretty artist. It aroused my sympathy for the lady, and I resolved to get after the love pirate and her victim.

"I called on the artist and represented myself as a fortune-teller. After a while I praised her pictures and succeeded in talking myself into her good graces. She did not impress me as being the bold, brazen vampire the other lady had pictured her. I told her fortune by the latest approved methods which I had carefully studied, and astonished her by bringing in all my intimate knowledge of her love affair with the doctor. She must have thought I was a wonder, as she imagined the things I mentioned were only known to her and the doctor. When I departed I was quite charmed with her. A few days later I called on the doctor, and, curiously enough, he was just superstitious enough to let me tell his fortune. I figured that the little artist had told him of my call and all I said to her, and I concluded that he wanted to test my so-called supernatural power. I

gave him some more of the information his supposed wife had given me, and he was fairly trembling with excitement. Under my cautious questioning I thought he was going to relent, give up the artist, and go back to his forlorn wife. But to my astonishment he gripped my wrist and fairly shouted:

"'I never was married in my life. The woman you allude to is a lunatic. She was an old friend, but had an obsession that she loved and married me. But such is not the fact."

"'Indeed,' I answered, staggered at this declaration.

"'She was insanely jealous of my artist friend, and has been annoying us with all the subtlecraft and fiendishness of the insane. I've made a complaint to the authorities to have her taken to the hospital for mental examination, and when I'm relieved of her persecutions I'm going to marry that artist.'

"Abashed, I withdrew, and a day later saw by an account in the newspaper that the doctor told the truth. That was one time that I was fooled. But then, even female detectives are only human, after all, and it isn't at all strange to have some one put over a trick on us."

TRAPPING A SMUGGLER

IT has not been a year since the steward of an ocean liner and a Japanese butler were caught in the act of trying to smuggle opium, which was valued at tens of thousands of dollars, into the port of New York. Those who participated in the seizure said that it was a case of "too much Murphy."

The customs authorities suspected that the drug was being brought over on the *Adriatic* and Inspector Walter Murphy was detailed on the case. The steward of the ship was William Murphy, and despite the similarity in names the inspector decided that the steward was the lawbreaker. He shadowed him for some time, but as the fates would have it, William did nothing whatever to cast discredit on the noble name of Murphy. But Walter had the gift of patience. He was a good waiter.

Just before Christmas of last year he was rewarded. He had won by waiting.

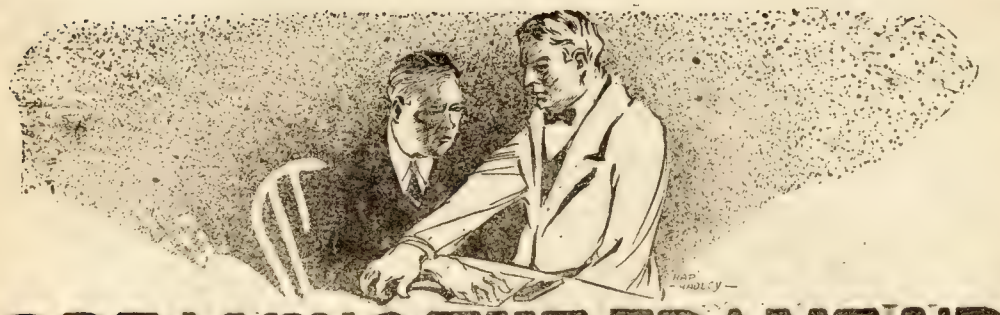
The Deputy Surveyor and a corps of trusted men met the *Adriatic* on its next arrived. Murphy, the steward, was openly accused and a demand made upon him for the keys of his locker. He said that unfortunately one of the sailors had them. Even as he spoke a seaman was seen to open a closet, take out a suspicious package and toss it overboard. He was searched and gave up the keys of the steward's locker. That yielded $5,000 worth of opium.

Murphy, the steward, put on the grill, confessed that he was taking it to Toga Sarto, a Japanese butler with whom he had been doing business for some time. Murphy, the inspector, was put on the job of locating the confederate of Murphy, the steward. He found him in a fashionable apartment on West Eighty-first street. He tapped on the door and when Sarto responded said with engaging frankness:

"I'm Murphy—the man you want to see."

"You may be Murphy," replied the keen-witted Japanese, "but you're not the Murphy I want to see."

He tried to close the door, but the inspector persuaded him not to do so. The nature of the persuasion may be guessed. A search of the apartment revealed between seventy and eighty cans of opium, worth about $5,000. The Japanese was placed under arrest and Murphy, the inspector, also had the privilege of taking Murphy, the steward, into custody. The importance of the case, from the Government's point of view, may be understood when it is stated that bail was fixed at $15,000.



BREAKING THE FRAME UP

by D. C. Retsloff

SILAS WESCOTT, mayor of San Blas, stopped abruptly and put a trembling hand to his damp forehead. "There is nothing else to tell," he said to George McBriff, chief of the Inter-state Detective Bureau.

"Sounds to me as if Chief Randall has established a clear case," replied McGriff as he swung around in the swivel chair behind his flat-topped desk and pressed a button. "Send Lanning in," he addressed the boy who answered the ring.

A tall, youngish man with gray eyes and a clean-cut face entered almost immediately.

"Lanning, meet Mr. Wescott of San Blas." The two men bowed and shook hands as Chief McGriff continued: "Sit down, Lanning, and listen to this. Mr. Wescott's son was arrested last Monday night by Bonsell, one of Chief Randall's men. Young Wescott and a second-story yegg known as 'Flash' Henry were nabbed together in San Blas at an intersection of a street and an alley at the rear of Senator Tompson's residence. At the preliminary hearing 'Flash' claimed that he and John Wescott framed the job together. He said that he was the lookout while Wescott entered the basement and lifted the senator's solid silver dining service. These are the statements made to me by Mr. Wescott."

"Sounds to me like Chief Randall has established a pretty clear case," William Lanning replied slowly.

McGriff nodded.

"My very words," he said as he shook the ashes from his cigar.

"Good God!" Silas Wescott stood up. "It can't be. My son has been wild, but he is no thief. I know something about crooks. 'Flash' Henry is just the sort to frame up a tale like this, especially if he's paid for it, and I'm positive that he was."

"Sit down, Mr. Wescott." McGriff pointed to the chair. "You must remember that in our line there are times without number when thefts and crimes are proven by circumstantial evidence alone. Tell us why you are so positive that 'Flash' Henry was paid to frame your son."

Wescott dropped back into his chair and moistened his lips as he began:

"Perhaps you've heard of the political row we had last fall in San Blas. I was the only candidate elected on the Business Men's ticket. With the exception of mayor, all the old gang were re-elected. I know men who have respectable families, who pose as decent citizens of San Blas, but who, to my personal knowledge, close their eyes to crime and hold out their hands for bribes. They've been after me almost every

day since I was elected; they've offered me money; they've threatened me and even tried to ruin my business; they want to run the town wide open. I've forgot them at every turn, but through a circumstance they are going to strike at me by a frame-up on my son." He wiped the perspiration from his flushed face.

"Are you sure it is a frame-up?" Lanning asked.

"Positive." Wescott's tone was a trifle curt. "It is a frame-up. John is wild, but he wouldn't commit a crime of any kind."

Lanning's brows met in a frown over his deep-set eyes.

"Where was he just before the robbery?"

A flush mounted Wescott's cheeks; the muscles of his jaw stood out under the thin skin as he said:

"I might as well tell you. John and I had quarreled about—well, about his extravagances. He left home, was gone four months and arrived in San Blas on a freight train at 12:30 the night of the robbery. When one travels on brake-beams he can't prove an alibi very well."

"Can't you explain the facts to the district attorney and get him to dismiss the case?" Lanning asked.

Wescott shook his head.

"Jim Flemming and I are political enemies. I can't ask any favors of him."

"What have you done so far for the defense?" McGriff questioned.

"Everything possible except humble myself to Jim Flemming. I've employed DeLano as our attorney. Yesterday he told me that he could not see a loophole for John, so I came to San Francisco thinking that I might find a man who could match District Attorney Flemming. Good heavens! Think of my son branded as a thief and a name that has come down from Revolutionary days clean as a white dove being dragged through the mire of crime!"

He slid forward in the chair and dropped his head on the desk.

"Why didn't you try to do something with Bonsell?" Lanning demanded.

"I did, and so did DeLano, but there was no chance. Bonsell went on record at the preliminary hearing."

"Brace up, Mr. Wescott." Lanning touched the bowed head. "Brace up. Where is your son?"

"He's still in jail. DeLano thought it best for him to remain there until the trial. 'Flash' is there, too."

"I don't believe the Interstate can be of much assistance to you," said McGriff. "Lanning is the best man on the Pacific coast, but from what you tell us I doubt if he can do anything."

"I know it looks dark." Wescott waved his hands. "I must have help, even if it is only to check over the facts as I've stated them; I feel that something will be discovered."

Only the ticking of the big clock on the wall interrupted McGriff's low tones.

"I can't see where you will gain anything by having things checked over. Everything points to the guilt of your son. You will excuse me for speaking plainly."

Wescott nodded.

"I know it looks that way, but John is no thief, I tell you. Don't say you will not try to help me."

After a few seconds of silence McGriff announced:

"Lanning will see what he can do."

Silas Wescott rose, his dignity revived.

"I thank you, chief; I feel confident that something will be discovered. I'm certain that Jim Flemming has a hand in this frame-up of my son."

For the next week William Lanning checked back on the statements made by Silas Wescott. He spent hours in questioning different persons in San Blas. The only new thing he discovered was that 'Flash,' Henry and Chief Randall of the local force were friends.

September first was the date set for the trial. At one o'clock Lanning with some hundred or more sat waiting in the court-room.

"Hear ye! Hear ye!" bawled the bailiff, rapping his gavel on a small table as Judge Haight appeared from his chamber. The occupants of the court-room stood up for a second as the judge took his place behind the desk.

Judge Haight, tall an angular, adjusted his dark-rimmed glasses, cleared his throat and began:

"The first case this afternoon is The People versus John Wescott, charge grand larceny. How do you plead?"

DeLano was on his feet instantly.

"We plead not guilty."

"Are the people ready?" questioned the judge.

"Ready, your honor," replied District Attorney Flemming.

"Impanel your jury." Judge Haight leaned back in the big chair behind the massive bench.

Lanning followed the selection of the jurors through the routine course. He knew that one juror would be as good as another, for not one scrap of evidence could be produced in favor of John Wescott.

"Gentlemen of the jury," began Jim Flemming, district attorney, tall, heavy and fat-faced. "The People intend to prove that John Wescott and William Henry, sometimes known as 'Flash' Henry, committed an act of grand larceny on the morning of July 13th by unlawfully breaking into the residence of Senator Tompson in the city of San Blas, county of San Blas, state of California. We intend to prove that John Wescott had in his possession at the time of his arrest the property unlawfully taken from the aforesaid residence."

The first witness for the state was Senator Tompson. He identified the silver dining service spread out on the table before the jury as the property that had been taken from his residence on the night in question.

Fixing his black eyes on Lanning and DeLano, District Attorney Flemming fingered a triple chain of gold stretching across his full stomach and said:

"I'll now call Mr. Bonsell, who made the arrest."

After the preliminary questions had been asked Flemming continued:

"Mr. Bonsell, tell the court as simply as you can just what you did on the morning of July 13th about 1:45."

There was a certain rat-like furtiveness about Bonsell in spite of his stocky form. His shifty, uneasy eyes studied the ceiling for a moment before he opened his thick lips.

"I was working on a case on the night of July 13th, and I had stopped under an arc light to look at my watch. Then I heard a noise as of some one running down the paved alley leading from Senator Tompson's house. At the intersection of the alley and State street I saw two men. When they saw me they turned as if to go back up the alley. I ordered them to stop, when one of them started to run, but he stumbled and fell and then the other threw up his hands. Almost at once I recognized them as John Wescott and 'Flash' Henry. Wescott was carrying a bag of what turned out to be this silverware. I took them both to headquarters and—and that's all."

"Take the witness," Flemming said in a very self-important manner.

DeLano and Lanning exchanged a few whispered words, then DeLano asked:

"Did you examine anything in Senator Tompson's house for finger-prints of the burglars?"

Detective Bonsell glanced at Flemming.

"We—we—did not. What was the use? 'Flash' owned up—told us the whole thing."

"That's all." DeLano sat down.

"'Flash' Henry," called the district attorney.

A man in the early thirties stood up and walked to the witness chair.

"You made a confession in relation to a robbery committed by John Wescott and yourself on the morning of July 13th about 1:30, did you not?" questioned Flemming.

"I did," "Flash" answered in a thin high-pitched voice.

"I will read a copy of that confession as you made it," and slowly Jim Flemming read the story of how John Wescott and "Flash" Henry had planned to rob the residence of Senator Tompson on the night of July 13th at the hour of midnight; how it was agreed between them that "Flash" was to remain on guard outside and Wescott, who had a knowledge of the inside arrangement of the house, was to carry away the silver dining service. When he had finished reading the district attorney addressed the man on the stand

"These statements as made by you are the truth?"

"Yes, that's the way the thing was pulled." "Flash" nodded his long, narrow head.

"Take the witness." Flemming made a gesture toward DeLano.

Again Lanning whispered to the attorney for John Wescott. DeLano turned to 'Flash.'

"When did you first see the silver service that was stolen from the residence of Senator Tompson on the night in question?"

For half a minute "Flash" did not answer, then with an intake of breath:

"Never until to-day, when I came into the court-room."

"Are you sure?" DeLano gave him a searching look.

"Of course I'm sure. I never saw it till to-day."

"Now," DeLano smiled, "will you please inform the court and the jury whether you ever handled these silver articles which were taken from the residence of Senator Tompson on the morning of July 13th?"

"I object," shouted Flemming. "'Flash' has already answered the question."

"Objection overruled," stated Judge Haight. "Answer the question."

"Why—er—you see I never touched a thing; never saw the stuff till to-day." "Flash" turned his porcelain blue eyes toward the district attorney.

"That's all." DeLano leaned back with a professional air. A wisp of a smile gathered around the corners of the mouth of William Lanning.

"The People rest, your honor. That completes the People's case." Flemming clipped off each syllable with sharp emphasis.

"Your honor," DeLano stood up and addressed the court, "we will now put John Wescott on the stand. We will make an effort to prove that he did not take any part in robbing Senator Tompson's house on the morning of July 13th."

John Wescott, a big, boyish-looking chap, left his seat beween his father and DeLano and took the witness chair. Without hesitating he told how on the night of July 13th he had reached San Blas from the south on the brake-beams of a freight train arriving shortly before one o'clock. He left the freight yards and was on his way to his father's home. At the intersection of State street and the alley leading from the rear of Senator Tompson's house he saw a man standing in the shadow of a pepper tree and another man coming down the alley. Some one shouted "Hands up!" John started to run, tripped and fell. As he fell he realized that something had been flung at him. It struck the pavement with a clatter. He got partly to his feet and recognized Bonsell standing over him with a gun. He dodged; another man grabbed him, and before he could do anything he was handcuffed. He heard Bonsell say: "You come along, 'Flash'; this is a pinch. Keep your face shut."

When John Wescott stopped speaking DeLano said:

"Now, tell the court when you first saw the silver offered in evidence."

"To-day," was the answer.

"Are you positive that you never handled these things?"

"Yes, absolutely positive."

The district attorney started toward the table on which the silver service stood.

"Don't let him touch any of that!" Lanning exclaimed.

DeLano sprang to his feet.

"Your honor, I request that no one be allowed to touch the exhibits offered by the state until I have made a statement, then the court may rule on my motion."

"What's the idea of the dramatics?" demanded Flemming as a red flush crept into his fat cheeks.

"The request is reasonable," answered the judge. "Proceed with the case. Take the witness, Mr. Flemming."

"No questions," Flemming shrugged. "This case is too plain for the People to waste the time of the court and the jurors on it."

"In that event," said DeLano quietly, "I move your honor that you appoint Mr. Lanning of the Interstate Detective Bureau, who is a finger-print expert, to examine the silver submitted as the property stolen by Wescott and 'Flash' for finger-prints, and

if they are found let Mr. Lanning develop them. You have heard both men deny touching the property."

Flemming's jaw dropped, his face took on an additional tinge of red.

"I object; the evidence in this case does not demand any such treatment. It would prove nothing."

"Your objections are not well taken, Mr. Flemming," said Judge Haight. "I'll appoint Mr. Lanning to develop the finger-prints if any are found on the exhibits offered by the state."

Jim Flemming gulped, fingered his watch chain nervously, darted a quick glance at Silas Wescott, turned and leaned against the judge's desk.

Immediately the court-room broke into a hum of voices as the spectators began to get the point just argued. The jurors stirred in their chairs; then they looked at young Wescott and at "Flash" Henry. There was a new interest on their faces as they exchanged whispered words and watched Lanning prepare to develop the evidence which might establish the guilt or the innocence of the son of the mayor of San Blas.

Moving the table with the silver service to a place directly in front of the jury and where the light from a south window fell full upon it, Lanning took from his pockets several small bottles, each containing a different colored powder, two fine camel's-hair brushes, a magnifying-glass, an inked pad and a packet of small white cards.

With deliberation he selected a large silver platter, taking care to touch only the beaded rim along its edge. He opened a bottle containing a black powder, dusted the platter lightly with some of it, then gently brushed the spot where the powder stuck. With the magnifying glass he studied the result.

There was a sneer on the heavy face of Jim Flemming as he leaned against the bench. The jurors watched with interest.

"If your honor pleases," Lanning addressed the judge, "I wish permission to take an impression of the fingers of John Wescott."

"You have the consent of the court," answered Judge Haight.

Lanning pressed John Wescott's fingers upon the inked pad, and then upon one of the small cards which he had taken from his pocket. Carefully he compared the finger-prints on the card with those developed on the silver platter.

Turning once more to the judge, he said: "If your honor pleases I wish permission to take an impression of the fingers of 'Flash' Henry."

"Proceed," said Judge Haight.

"Your honor, I object." Flemming jerked himself away from the bench. "There's some hocus-pocus about this, I'll——" He paused awkwardly.

"The court cannot sustain your objection, Mr. Flemming," Judge Haight said crisply.

When "Flash" Henry heard the request to take his finger-prints his face changed to an ashen gray; for an instant he sagged in his chair, then his lips twisted into a cunning smile; he sprang to his feet, and pitching his voice high, he said:

"I pulled the job, judge."

Before Judge Haight could speak, Jim Flemming shouted:

"'Flash' is crazy, your honor. I've known it for a week. I told Bonsell so this morning."

"I'm not," "Flash" contradicted. "Circumstances made it just right for a frame-up on young Wescott. Flemming has been laying for the old man ever since he was elected mayor. Bonsell was my lookout on the night of the robbery. He recognized young Wescott and made quick work of getting him. He told me that Flemming promised him a fat job if he'd get something on either of the Wescotts, and I was paid for helping with the frame-up."

Flemming struck his fists together. "'Flash' Henry," he shouted, "you're a liar, you're——" His voice failed him, he took a step forward and fell to the floor.

Silas Wescott bent over him. The heart's action of Jim Flemming, district attorney, stopped under the hand of the mayor of San Blas.

The French Police

THE French are an ingenious race. There is something subtle about the psychology of their minds that can only be matched by the Japanese. The best examples of this trait may be found most pronounced in their police department. There are certain crimes that are hard to detect and certain criminals hard to arrest, so the Parisian prefect of police has met the situation with new inventions to fit the case. For example, when a fugitive from justice secures himself in a room from which firearms cannot dislodge him, laughing gas is injected through a crack or keyhole in the door, or it may be hurled in through a window in the form of a bomb. It has been demonstrated that enough of this gas can be released in a few minutes to reduce the most hardened criminal to a state of helplessness. His hilarious laughter is the indication of his incapability, then the police go in to get him before the effects of the gas wear away. The lessons of the war have taught the authorities that gases of various kinds can be employed advantageously in criminal hunting. There was a time when asphyxiating gases were used, but they invariably so choked the victims that it was difficult to obtain a statement or a confession, and in some instances the crook died. Tear gas is equally as painful and dangerous. It is not the object of the police to inflict torture. Consequently pain-inflicting gases are only used in desperate cases, and the laughing gas is gaining in favor. Its effect was proven in a recent case. A notorious criminal was suspected of guilt of a crime, but there was no way to fasten the deed upon him. Taken into custody, he was given a dose of gas, and his inquisitors watched him keenly. The effect of the gas soon manifested itself. He began to laugh and prance and shake with joviality. Tears ran down his cheeks from the violence of his hilarity, and the officers questioned him closely. In a sudden burst of confidence he slapped the prefect on the back and cried: "Of course I committed those burglaries, and here's the way I did it." And the detailed confession he made cleared up a mystery that had puzzled the police for months. Of course such methods would not be tolerated in the American police department, as all civil prisoners are considered innocent until proven guilty, and unless the police are positive of a criminal's guilt he is treated with more consideration than the European authorities accord their prisoners. Rough handling or a grilling third degree are never resorted to nowadays unless the case actually warrants it. The ordinary American cop or detective is not accorded much more protection in his hazardous vocation than a club or a pistol. But the French authorities have recently come to the conclusion that their men require a greater measure of personal protection. For this purpose a shield and a body armor is now provided for policemen who are about to undertake an extra hazardous mission. In fact the prefecture has placed a large order for pliable chrome steel plates, the idea being to hinge and buckle them on beneath the officer's tunic before attempting a dangerous arrest. Under rigid tests this armor has stopped an ordinary revolver bullet at a few paces distant. The resistance offered by the armor can only succumb to hardened steel bullets of the latest design, and their force is broken and spent once they strike and pierce the armor, so that very little injury results. There are times when a fugitive from justice have barricaded themselves in houses and defended themselves with firearms and other instances where they have shot at attacking officers from behind trees and rocks. As the criminals are thus protected and the officers exposed to their bullets, the armor is expected to give some degree of protec-

tion to the policeman working the attack. It is a well-known fact in police circles that the average criminal when threatened with arrest seldom hesitates to fire at an officer, and when these desperate men shoot they generally shoot to kill. It is therefore the height of folly to take any chances with them.

Certain sentimental people set up a violent protest when the police are compelled to resort to brutality in the capture of a criminal. It should be considered that in a criminal hunt it is a case of desperation in which fine and humane methods have no consideration whatever. The crook is seeking the policeman's life, and the officer knows it, and has to defend himself accordingly. On the other hand the policeman endures a lot to capture his man alive. Taking a criminal dead is of little value in court. There are instances on record of officers having been beaten, stabbed and shot, yet they refrained from killing their man in order to get him alive.

POSED AS POLICEMEN

POSING as policemen who had come "to investigate his dishonest earnings," two holdup men entered Vincent Auriema's grocery store, at 15 Seventh avenue, Newark, early the other day, compelled him to open the safe, and after handcuffing him carried away $1,600 in American money and $1,200 in Italian lire.

After a chase of three blocks a man describing himself as Joseph Fliejette, 35 years old, of 3175 Willett avenue, Manhattan, was captured, identified by Auriema as one of the intruders and locked up in the Second Precinct station.

According to the story Auriema told the police the two men came into the store shortly after midnight and bought and ate sandwiches. They waited for nearly half an hour until there were no other customers in the store and then one of them showed a badge and told Auriema they were policemen. After Auriema opened the safe, they stuffed the money in their pockets and then told him they would have to take him to the Second Precinct station.

Handcuffs were put on Auriema's wrists without resistance, but when the pair decided to leave him there all night and "come back in the morning" and started out of the store with the money Auriema shouted. A severe beating failed to lower his voice and the men fled.

Passersby, attracted by Auriema's cries for help, gave chase and overtook Fliejette; he denied his guilt and declared he was one of the crowd who chased the fleeing men.

Statement of the ownership, management, etc., required by the Act of Congress of August 24, 1912, of "MYSTERY MAGAZINE," published semi-monthly at New York, N. Y., for April 1, 1923. State of New York, County of New York:—Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and County aforesaid, personally appeared Luis Senarens, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the Editor of the "MYSTERY MAGAZINE," and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management, etc., of the aforesaid publication, for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, embodied in section 443, Postal Laws and Regulations, to-wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor and business manager are: Publisher—Harry E. Wolff, Publisher, Inc., 166 West 23d Street, New York, N. Y. Editor—Luis Senarens, 166 West 23d Street, New York, N. Y. Managing Editor—None. Business Manager—None.

2. That the owners are: Harry E. Wolff, Publisher, Inc., 166 West 23d Street, New York, N. Y.; Harry E. Wolff, 166 West 23d Street, New York, N. Y.; M. N. Wolff, 166 West 23d Street New York, N. Y.; J. F. Desbecker, 166 West 23d Street, New York, N. Y.; R. W. Desbecker, 166 West 23d Street, New York, N. Y.; C. W. Hastings, 166 West 23d Street, New York, N. Y.

3. That the known bondholders, mortgagees and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are: None.

4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the names of the owners, stockholders and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear upon the books of the company, but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting is given; also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona-fide owner; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association or corporation has any interest, direct or indirect, in the said stock, bonds or other securities than as so stated by him.

LUIS SENARENS, Editor.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 27th day of March, 1923. — Seymour W. Steiner. (My Commission expires March 30, 1924.

Mystery Magazine

The feature stories already published in this magazine are worth reading. The following are the titles of the novelettes contained in the numbers already printed.

1 "The Eel Man," by Robert Carlton Brown.
2 "Zitana of Maison Rouge," by F. W. Doughty.
3 "The Mysterious Web," by Armstrong Perry.
4 "Under the Hypnotic Spell," by Dr. H. Enton.
5 "The Silken Sheath," by Crittenden Marriott.
6 "A Fortune Teller's Secret," by Gladys Hall.
7 "The Mystic Emblem," by Marie Coolidge Rask.
8 "The Cards of Fate," by William Goode.
9 "Mr. Bachellor's Apartments," by W. H. Osborne.
10 "The Inner Wheel," by Octavius Roy Cohen.
11 "The Voice of the Valley," by Robt. C. Brown.
12 "The Sign of the Seven Sharks," by C. F. Oursler.
13 "Under a Mask," By Crittenden Marriott.
14 "Case 4,444," by Gladys Hall.
15 "After a Million," by Police Captain Howard.
16 "Shadowing the Blue Triangle," by C. F. Oursler.
17 "The Case of Captain Fortesque," by R. Ingalls.
18 "The Bird-Headed Sphinx," by Edith S. Tupper.
19 "The Double Mystery," by Dr. Harry Enton.
20 "The Magician Detective," by C. F. Oursler.
21 "King Cobra Mystery," by George Gilbert.
22 "The Haunted Corridors," by Wm. H. Osborne.
23 "No Man's Man," by Maxwell Smith.
24 "The Trevor Puzzle," by T. C. Harbaugh.
25 "The Trail of Roses," by Edmund Condon.
26 "The Hindoo Vanishing Clue," by Pauline Bouve.
27 "Who Was Guilty?" by Beulah Poynter.
28 "The Evil Eye," by Chas. F. Oursler.
29 "The Thirteenth Door," by Edith S. Tupper.
30 "The Game of Detective Carew," by L. Jerome.
31 "Law-maker and Law-breaker," by B. Poynter
32 "The Counterfeit Heiress," by Inspector Harrigan.
33 "Tracked to China," by Chief Roger O'Brien.
34 "After the German Spies," by May Halsey Miller.
35 "The Clue in the Box," by Alexander Douglas.
36 "Trained by a French Detective," by Rene Renaud.
37 "A Drop of Ink," by Lieut. Robt. W. Warden.
38 "The Ten Doctors," by Allan Arnold Fox.
39 "The Stain on Page 61," by Chas. T. Jordan.
40 "A Masked Mystery," by Police Sergeant Kelly.
41 "The Black Soul," by Beulah Poynter.
42 "The Sanctuary," by Wm. H. Osborne.
43 "The Mystery of the Seven Shadows," by Chas. F. Oursler.
44 "The Sign of the Dragon," by C. Martin Eddy, Jr.
45 "The Magic of Detective Woo Fang," by Frank F. Whitfield.
46 "The Decoy," by William Hamilton Osborne.
47 "The House With 30 Steps," by Ralph D. Porter.
48 "When the Clock Struck 13," by Dr. Harry Enton.
49 "A Piece of Blotting Paper," by Dorothy Weber.
50 "The $200,000 Mystery," by Ethel Rosemon.
51 "The Case of Dr. Brice," by Mary R. P. Hatch.
52 "The Phantom Motor," by Laura R. Montgomery.
53 "The Blackjack," by William H. Osborne.
54 "The Whispering Head," by Chas. F. Oursler.
55 "The Inspector's Strange Case," by B. Poynter.
56 "The Secret of the Sealed Book," by E. Rosemon.
57 "The Clue of Steel," by Willis Lathrop.
58 "Alias Louis Vardon," by Wm. H. Osborne.
59 "Mystery of the Old-Time Club," by C. Bingold.
60 "Caught With the Evidence," by Ethel Rosemon.
61 "A Little Gold Spider," by Cecil Burleigh.
62 "The Velvet Touch," by Julian Darrow.
63 "The Clue of the Red Lamp," by C. F. Oursler.
64 "The Scheme of Solomon Snare," by W. Osborne.
65 "Quicker Than the Eye," by Ralph Cummins.
66 "The Clue of the Dark Room," by H. Craigie.
67 "The Tongue of Osiris," by Marc Edmund Jones.
68 "Detective Wade's Big Case," by E. Rosemon.
69 "The Spirit Bell," by Charles Fulton Oursler.
70 "The House Behind the Wall," by Julian Darrow.
71 "The Admiral's Spoons," by Wm. H. Osborne.
72 "The Canine Clue," by Thomas J. Lally.
73 "The Psychic Enemy," by Arthur Wm. Anderson.
74 "The Wonder Girl," by Ralph Cummins.
75 "On the Wrong Trail," by Ethel Rosemon.
76 "The Spirit Witness," by Chas. F. Oursler.
77 "The Little White Room," by Edmund Jones.
78 "The Stolen Year," by Edmund Elliot.
79 "The Affair at Hollywood House," by W. Kofoed.
80 "A Keyless Mystery," by Hamilton Craigie.
81 "Professor Satan," by Charles Fulton Oursler.
82 "Who Killed McNally?" by Beulah Poynter.
83 "The Clue of the Whorl," by Katherine Stagg.
84 "The 'Czar' and the Ring," by Edmund Elliot.
85 "The Clue of Flame," by Jack Bechdolt.
86 "The Face in the Crowd," by Edmund Jones.
87 "The Man in Room No. 7," by Chas. F. Oursler.
88 "Four Ten-Dollar Bills," by Henry G. Howland.
89 "A Challenge to Power," by Dr. Harry Enton.
90 "The House Next-Door," by Captain Howard.
91 "The Trance Detective," by Chas. F. Oursler.
92 "Friday at Twelve," by Katherine Stagg.
93 "By the Left Hand," by Hamilton Craigie.
94 "The Melody of Death," by Jack Bechdolt.
95 "The Trick of the Great Yen How," by William Hamilton Osborne.
96 "At Moriarity's," by Fred S. Shuey.
97 "The Lost Star of the Films," by Jack Bechdolt.
98 "Counterfeit Clues," by Chas. F. Oursler.
99 "The Cross," by W. S. Ingram.
100 "The Secret Service Mystery," by Hamilton Craigie and Elliot Balestier.
101 "A Crimson Price," by Elliott Lester.
102 "The Inspector's Strange Case," by G. Jacobs.
103 "A Museum Mystery," by Jack Bechdolt.
104 "The Little Red Book," by J. Alexander Young.
105 "A Man from Siam," by Chas. F. Oursler.
106 "The Clue of the Emerald Ring," by B. Poynter.
107 "Hell's Hinges," by Hamilton Craigie.
108 "The Wolf," by Katherine Stagg.
109 "The Brass Button," by Jack Bechdolt.
110 "A Whispering Mummy," by Chas. F. Oursler.
111 "Trapping the Jewel Smugglers," by B. Poynter.
112 "The Missing Evidence," by Harold F. Podhaski.
113 "A Clue by Radio," by Capt. Jack Static.
114 "The District Attorney's Secret," by C. Oursler.
115 "A Man From Headquarters," by H. Craigie.
116 "The Girl in the Case," by Carl Glick.
117 "A Scientific Detective," by D. G. McDonald.
118 "Number Nine Queer Street," by Jack Bechdolt.
119 "Trailed by a Private Detective," by Gottlieb Jacobs.
120 "The Mouse Trap," by Edith Sessions Tupper.
121 "A Radio Mystery," by Capt. Jack Static
122 "The Clawing Death," by Beulah Poynter.
123 "A Master of Millions," by Chas. Fulton Oursler.
124 "The Secret of Room 13," by Hamilton Craigie.
125 "Six Months to Live," by George Bronson-Howard.
126 "Seals of Wax," by Jack Bechdolt.
127 "When Crooks Conspire," by Harold F. Podhaski.
128 "The Mystery of the Blue Car," by H. Craigie.
129 "The Detective and the Law," by Frederick F. Shuey.
130 "The Hand in the Dark," by Chas. F. Oursler.
131 "The Trail of a Rogue," by George Bronson-Howard.

If you cannot procure any of the numbers you want from your newsdealer, send us the price, ten cents, in money or postage stamps, and we will mail them to you postage free.

HARRY E. WOLFF, Publisher, Inc., 166 West 23d Street, New York City, N. Y.

Our Ten-Cent Hand Books

Useful, Instructive, and Amusing. They contain Valuable Information on Almost Every Subject.

No. 26. HOW TO ROW, SAIL AND BUILD A BOAT.—Fully illustrated. Full instructions are given in this little book, together with instructions on swimming and riding, companion sports to boating.

No. 28. HOW TO TELL FORTUNES.—Every one is desirous of knowing what his future life will bring forth, whether happiness or misery, wealth or poverty. You can tell by a glance at this little book. Buy one and be convinced.

No. 29. HOW TO BECOME AN INVENTOR.—Every boy should know how inventions originated. This book explains them all, giving examples in electricity, hydraulics, magnetism, optics, pneumatics, mechanics, etc.

No. 33. HOW TO BEHAVE.—Containing the rules and etiquette of good society and the easiest and most approved methods of appearing to good advantage at parties, balls, the theatre, church, and in the drawing-room.

No. 35. HOW TO PLAY GAMES.—A complete and useful little book, containing the rules and regulations of billiards, bagatelle, back-gammon, croquet, dominoes, etc.

No. 36. HOW TO SOLVE CONUNDRUMS.—Containing all the leading conundrums of the day, amusing riddles, curious catches and witty sayings.

No. 40. HOW TO MAKE AND SET TRAPS.—Including hints on how to catch moles, weasels, otter, rats, squirrels and birds. Also how to cure skins. Copiously illustrated.

No. 41. THE BOYS OF NEW YORK END MEN'S JOKE BOOK.—Containing a great variety of the latest jokes used by the most famous end men. No amateur minstrels is complete without this wonderful little book.

No. 42. THE BOYS OF NEW YORK STUMP SPEAKER.—Containing a varied assortment of Stump speeches, Negro, Dutch and Irish. Also end men's jokes. Just the thing for home amusement and amateur shows.

No. 45. THE BOYS OF NEW YORK MINSTREL GUIDE AND JOKE BOOK.—Something new and very instructive. Every boy should obtain this book, as it contains full instructions for organizing an amateur minstrel troupe.

No. 46. HOW TO MAKE AND USE ELECTRICITY.—A description of the wonderful uses of electricity and electro magnetism; together with full instructions for making Electric Toys, Batteries, etc. By George Trebel, A. M., M. D. Containing over fifty illustrations.

No. 48. HOW TO BUILD AND SAIL CANOES.—A handy book for boys, containing full directions for constructing canoes and the most popular manner of sailing them. Fully illustrated.

No. 49. HOW TO DEBATE.—Giving rules for conducting debates, outlines for debates, questions for discussion and the best sources for procuring information on the questions given.

No. 50. HOW TO STUFF BIRDS AND ANIMALS.—A valuable book, giving instructions in collecting, preparing, mounting and preserving birds, animals and insects.

No. 51. HOW TO DO TRICKS WITH CARDS.—Containing explanations of the general principles of sleight-of-hand applicable to card tricks; of card tricks with ordinary cards, and not requiring sleight-of-hand; of tricks involving sleight-of-hand, or the use of specially prepared cards. Illustrated.

No. 53. HOW TO WRITE LETTERS.—A wonderful little book, telling you how to write to your sweetheart, your father, mother, sister, brother, employer; and in fact, everybody and anybody you wish to write to.

No. 54. HOW TO KEEP AND MANAGE PETS.—Giving complete information as to the manner and method of raising, keeping, taming, breeding and managing all kinds of pets; also giving full instructions for making cages, etc. Fully explained by twenty-eight illustrations.

No. 56. HOW TO BECOME AN ENGINEER.—Containing full instructions how to become a locomotive engineer; also directions for building a model locomotive; together with a full description of everything an engineer should know.

No. 58. HOW TO BE A DETECTIVE.—By Old King Brady, the well-known detective. In which he lays down some valuable rules for beginners, and also relates some adventures of well-known detectives.

No. 60. HOW TO BECOME A PHOTOGRAPHER.—Containing useful information regarding the Camera and how to work it; also how to make Photographic Magic Lantern Slides and other Transparencies. Handsomely illustrated.

No. 61. HOW TO MAKE ELECTRICAL MACHINES.—Containing full directions for making electrical machines, induction coils, dynamos and many novel toys to be worked by electricity. By B. A. R. Bennett. Fully illustrated.

No. 65. MULDOON'S JOKES.—The most original joke book ever published, and it is brimful of wit and humor. It contains a large collection of songs, jokes, conundrums, etc., of Terrence Muldoon, the great wit, humorist and practical joker of the day.

No. 66. HOW TO DO PUZZLES.—Containing over three hundred interesting puzzles and conundrums,, with key to same. A complete book. Fully illustrated.

No. 67. HOW TO DO ELECTRICAL TRICKS.—Containing a large collection of instructive and highly amusing electrical tricks, together with illustrations. By A. Anderson.

No. 68. HOW TO DO CHEMICAL TRICKS.—Containing over one hundred highly amusing and instructive tricks with chemicals. By A. Anderson. Handsomely illustrated.

No. 69. HOW TO DO SLEIGHT-OF-HAND.—Containing over fifty of the latest and best tricks used by magicians. Also containing the secret of second sight. Fully illustrated.

No. 70. HOW TO MAKE MAGIC TOYS.—Containing directions for making Magic Toys and devices of many kinds. Fully illustrated.

No. 71. HOW TO DO MECHANICAL TRICKS.—Containing complete instructions for performing over sixty Mechanical Tricks. Fully illustrated.

No. 72. HOW TO DO SIXTY TRICKS WITH CARDS.—Embracing all of the latest and most deceptive card tricks, with illustrations.

No. 74. HOW TO WRITE LETTERS CORRECTLY.—Containing full instructions for writing letters on almost any subject; also rules for punctuation and composition, with specimen letters.

No. 76. HOW TO TELL FORTUNES BY THE HAND.—Containing rules for telling fortunes by the aid of lines of the hand, or the secret of palmistry. Also the secret of telling future events by aid of moles, marks, scars, etc. Illustrated.

No. 77. HOW TO DO FORTY TRICKS WITH CARDS.—Containing deceptive Card Tricks as performed by leading conjurers and magicians. Arranged for home amusement. Fully illustrated.

No. 80. GUS WILLIAMS' JOKE BOOK.—Containing the latest jokes, anecdotes and funny stories of this world-renowned German comedian. Sixty-four pages; handsome colored cover, containing a half-tone photo of the author.

No. 82. HOW TO DO PALMISTRY.—Containing the most approved methods of reading the lines on the hand, together with a full explanation of their meaning. Also explaining phrenology, and the key to telling character by the bumps on the head. By Leo Hugo Koch, A. C. S. Fully illustrated.

No. 83. HOW TO HYPNOTIZE.—Containing valuable and instructive information regarding the science of hypnotism. Also explaining the most approved methods which are employed by the leading hypnotists of the world. By Leo Hugo Koch, A. C. S.

For sale by all newsdealers, or will be sent to any address on receipt of price, 10c. per copy, in money or stamps, by

HARRY E. WOLFF, Publisher, Inc.
166 West 23d Street, New York City

GLANDS MADE ACTIVE BY A NEW DISCOVERY

Chemists Find a Substance Which Renews Vigor by Effect on Nerves and Secretions.

A discovery made recently by medical chemists will be hailed with delight by millions. It is a substance which quickly renews youthful vigor by increasing the activity of the nerves and glands on which vital force depends. Its effect is so prompt that a few grains of it produce a visible improvement. Thousands who have tried it tell of delightful results in 24 to 48 hours, many reporting a full restoration of physical powers within a week.

The discovery has what scientists call a "selective" effect, concentrated directly on important nerve centers, glands and blood vessels. Thus the circulation improves, a new sense of warmth is felt and the increased glandular activity soon brings a restoration of youthful power and animation, manifested in sparkling eyes, buoyant step and an eagerness and increased capacity for the duties of life. The effects are virtually the same in both old and young. Men past 60 say the discovery has given them the vigor of the prime of life.

In the research department of the Melton laboratories, the substance has been made available for home treatment by combining it, in tablet form, with other invigorating ingredients. The result, known as korex compound, is a double-strength product, containing no harmful drugs, which users pronounce the most powerful and delightful vitalizer known. In fact, its success has been so great that the distributors invite any person needing it to take a double-strength treatment with the understanding that it costs nothing if it fails.

If you wish to try this amazing invigorator, write confidentially to the Melton Laboratories, 360 Massachusetts Bldg., Kansas City, Mo., and the treatment will be mailed to you in a plain, sealed package. You may enclose $2, or simply send your name, without money, and pay $2 and postage on delivery. In either case, if you report "no results" after one week, the laboratories will refund your money. These laboratories are thoroughly reliable, so nobody need hesitate to accept their guaranteed offer.

FRECKLES

Now Is the Time to Get Rid of These Ugly Spots

There's no longer the slightest need of feeling ashamed of your freckles, as Othine — double strength — is guaranteed to remove these homely spots.

Simply get an ounce of Othine from any druggist and apply a little of it night and morning and you should soon see that even the worst freckles have begun to disappear, while the lighter ones have vanished entirely. It is seldom that more than an ounce is needed to completely clear the skin and gain a beautiful clear complexion.

Be sure to ask for the double strength Othine as this is sold under guarantee of money back if it fails to remove freckles.

MORPHINE
New Home Treatment
Send Stamp for Book of Information
DR. QUAYLE'S SANITARIUM
MADISON, OHIO. DEPT. S 19

Are You Lonesome? Write Eva Moore, Box 908, Jacksonville, Fla. Stamp Appreciated.

HELP WANTED — FEMALE

Earn $20 weekly, spare time at home, addressing, mailing music circulars. Send 10 cents for music information, etc. American Music Co., 1658 Broadway, New York.

OLD MONEY WANTED

$2 to $500 EACH paid for hundreds of Old Coins dated before 1895. Keep ALL old or odd money. Send 10 cts. for New Ill's Coin Value Book, 4x6. You may have valuable coins. Get Posted. We pay cash.

CLARKE COIN CO., Ave. 13, Le Roy, N. Y.

BE A DETECTIVE

Earn Big Money Travel Big Demand
Experience unnecessary. We train you. Write

AMERICAN DETECTIVE SYSTEM,
1968 Broadway New York City

Sell Us Your Spare Time — You can earn Fifteen to Fifty dollars weekly writing showcards at home. No canvassing; pleasant profitable profession, easily, quickly learned by our simple graphic block system; artistic ability unnecessary; we instruct you and supply work. Wilson Methods, Limited, Dept. Y, Toronto, Canada.

Be a Detective — Excellent opportunity, good pay, travel. Write C. T. Ludwig, 959 Westover Bldg., Kansas City, Mo.

BIG VALUE for 10 Cts.

6 Songs, words and music; 25 Pictures Pretty Girls; 40 Ways to Make Money; 1 Joke Book; 1 Book on Love; 1 Magic Book; 1 Book Letter Writing; 1 Dream Book and Fortune Teller; 1 Cook Book; 1 Base Ball Book, gives rules for games; 1 Toy Maker Book; Language of Flowers; 1 Morse Telegraph Alphabet; 12 Chemical Experiments; Magic Age Table; Great North Pole Game; 100 Conundrums; 3 Puzzles; 12 Games; 30 Verses for Autograph Albums. All the above by mail for 10 cts. and 2 cts. postage.

ROYAL SALES CO., Box 628 South Norwalk, Conn.

Why haven't you clipped this coupon?

IT takes but a moment to mark the career of your choice, sign your name, clip out and mail. Yet that simple act has started more than two million men and women toward success.

In city, town and country all over the world, men are living contented lives in happy, prosperous homes—because they clipped this coupon.

In every line of business and industry, in shops, stores, offices, factories, in mines and on railroads, men are holding important positions and receiving splendid salaries—because they clipped this coupon.

Clerks have become sales, advertising and business managers, mechanics have become foremen, superintendents and engineers, carpenters have become architects and contractors, men and boys have risen from nothing to places of responsibility—because they clipped this coupon.

You have seen it in almost every magazine you have looked at for years. And while you have been passing it by, more than ten thousand men and women each month have been making it the first stepping stone to real success in life.

Will you still turn away from opportunity? Can you still go on, putting in your days at the same grind, getting the same pay envelope with the same insufficient sum, when such a little thing can be the means of changing your whole life?

You *can* have the position you want in the work you like best, a salary that will give you and your family the home, the comforts, the little luxuries you would like them to have. No matter what your age, your occupation, your education, or your means—you can do it!

All we ask is the chance to prove it. That's fair, isn't it? Then mark and mail this coupon. There's no obligation and not a penny of cost. It's a little thing that takes but a moment, but it's the most important thing you can do today. Do it now!

— — — — — — — — TEAR OUT HERE — — — — — — — —

INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOLS
Box 5267 Scranton, Penna.

Without cost or obligation, please tell me how I can qualify for the position or in the subject *before* which I have marked an X:

BUSINESS TRAINING DEPARTMENT

☐ Business Management	☐ Salesmanship
☐ Industrial Management	☐ Advertising
☐ Personnel Organization	☐ Better Letters
☐ Traffic Management	☐ Foreign Trade
☐ Business Law	☐ Stenography and Typing
☐ Banking and Banking Law	☐ Business English
☐ Accountancy (including C.P.A.)	☐ Civil Service
☐ Nicholson Cost Accounting	☐ Railway Mail Clerk
☐ Bookkeeping	☐ Common School Subjects
☐ Private Secretary	☐ High School Subjects
☐ Business Spanish ☐ French	☐ Illustrating ☐ Cartooning

TECHNICAL AND INDUSTRIAL DEPARTMENT

☐ Electrical Engineering	☐ Architect
☐ Electric Lighting	☐ Blue Print Reading
☐ Mechanical Engineer	☐ Contractor and Builder
☐ Mechanical Draftsman	☐ Architectural Draftsman
☐ Machine Shop Practice	☐ Concrete Builder
☐ Railroad Positions	☐ Structural Engineer
☐ Gas Engine Operating	☐ Plumbing and Heating
☐ Civil Engineer	☐ Chemistry ☐ Pharmacy
☐ Surveying and Mapping	☐ Automobile Work
☐ Metallurgy	☐ Navigation
☐ Steam Engineering	☐ Agriculture and Poultry
☐ Radio ☐ Airplane Engines	☐ Mathematics

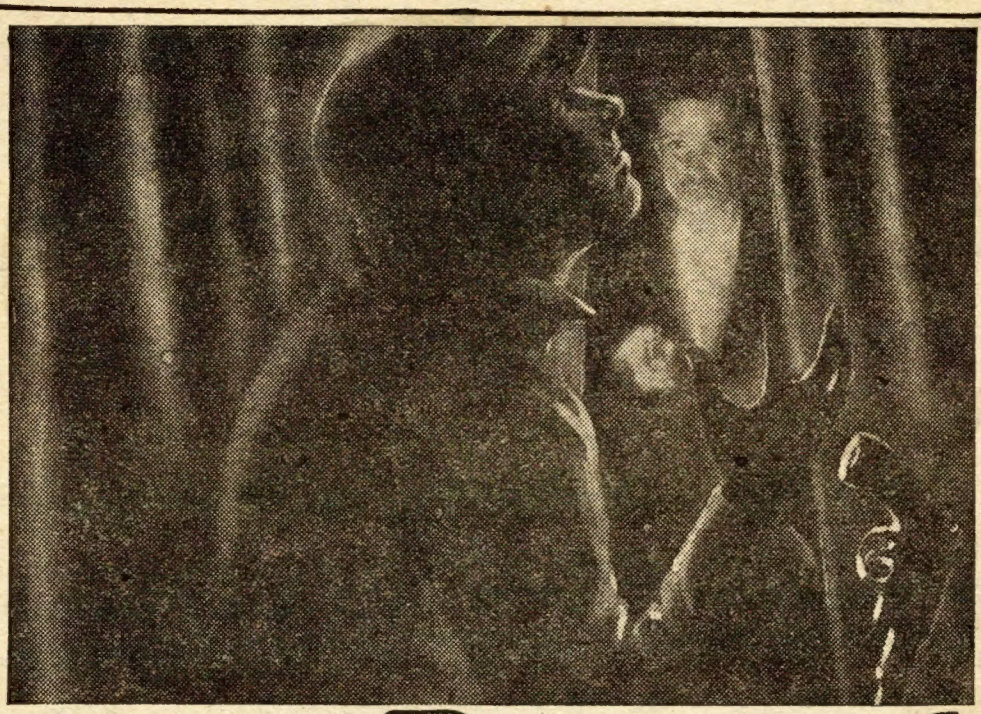
Name.....

Street 6-26-22
Address.....

City..... State.....

Occupation.....

Persons residing in Canada should send this coupon to the International Correspondence Schools Canadian, Limited, Montreal, Canada.



$2500 Reward!

For the Capture of An Unknown Man

Twice he had entered the St. Clair Mansion. What was he after? Who? What was in danger?

Berteau, the famous detective, had warned St. Clair *that the mysterious marauder would come again.* And now—a noise in the passage! The creak of an opening door. A shot in the dark! A capture!

Is this wounded stranger the mysterious intruder? Who could tell? Yet Berteau identified the man without hesitation and won the $2500 reward.

How did he do it? Easy enough for the Finger Print Expert. He is the specialist, the leader, the *cream* of detectives. Every day's paper tells their wonderful exploits in solving mysterious crimes and convicting dangerous criminals.

More Trained Men Needed

The demand for trained men by governments, states, cities, detective agencies, corporations, and private bureaus is becoming greater every day. Here is a real opportunity for YOU. Can you imagine a more fascinating line of work than this? Often life and death depend upon finger print evidence—and big rewards go to the expert. Many experts can earn regularly from $3,000 to $10,000 per year.

Learn at Home in Spare Time

And now you can learn the secrets of this science at home in your spare time. Any man with common school education and average ability can become a Finger Print Detective in a surprisingly short time.

Course in Secret Service FREE

For a limited time we are making a special offer of a ***Professional Finger Print Outfit, absolutely Free, and Free Course in Secret Service Intelligence.*** Mastery of these two kindred professions will open a brilliant career for you.

Write quickly for fully illustrated free book on Finger Prints which explains this wonderful training in detail. Don't wait until this offer has expired—mail the coupon now. You may never see this announcement again! You assume no obligation—you have everything to gain and nothing to lose. Write at once—address

University of Applied Science
Dept. 1099 1920 Sunnyside Ave., Chicago, Illinois

UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCE
Dept. 1099—1920 Sunnyside Ave., Chicago, Illinois

Gentlemen:—Without any obligation whatever, send me your new, fully illustrated, FREE book on Finger Prints and your offer of a FREE course in Secret Service Intelligence and the Free Professional Finger Print Outfit.

Name.....

Street Address.....

City and State.....

The Finger Print Left by the Thief on the Bottle of "Hop"

How Blankenship Saved the Innocent Stranger

The hospital had been robbed!

Government agents had been bearing down hard on the drug traffic throughout the state of Illinois. Dope-fiends, desperate for their "coke", were growing bold in their depredations. And now they had looted the hospital supply!

Nurse Robinson, on her nightly round, had seen a stranger walking down the corridor. She gave the police an accurate description. A man was arrested. He fitted the description exactly. He was unable to furnish a satisfactory alibi. Things looked black for him.

Blankenship, private detective and Finger Print Expert, was called in to gather evidence that would make conviction sure. He worked for an hour or so. Then he went to the Chief and said, "You have the wrong man. He is innocent." Blankenship had found Finger Prints on the empty "dope" bottles. He Finger Printed the suspect. A glance showed no similarity.

Later a suspicious looking "dope fiend" was picked up. He, too, matched the nurse's description. His Finger Prints did *talley*. And he was sent over the road where we hope he is being cured of his terrible vice. Blankenship had protected the innocent and convicted the guilty.

This is a *true* story. E. Blankenship, Muscatine, Iowa, is a *real* Finger Print Expert, graduate of the University of Applied Science.

Earns Money Before Finishing Fifth Lesson

Blankenship began earning money in Finger Print Work before he had finished the fifth lesson of his course. Today he is a branch manager of a big detective agency. In a letter he says, "I was surprised to see how simple and easy it is. No one could ask better service and attention than you gave me."

You, Too, Can Enter This Fascinating Profession

Why don't you become a Finger Print Expert? The course can be taken at home, by mail. Study in your spare time. Get into the Big Money, Professional class. Win the envy of your friends and family by holding an official position. Take your future in your own hands and make it what you will.

Get Big Men to Boost for You

Graduates of this school SUCCEED. You have not only the best education obtainable, but also the helpful friendship of our President, Mr. T. G. Cooke. He never leaves a graduate to shift for himself. Ask any one of a hundred graduates whose names we will gladly send you.

Wonderful New Book—FREE to You

Send the coupon below for the most unique book ever published on Finger Prints. Full of fascinating *true* stories, about the exciting exploits of Big Men in the Finger Print Profession. Full of "gripping" illustrations. Write for it without fail. Just send the coupon. That is all.

Free—Professional Finger Print Outfit

To students who enroll now, we are making a wonderful offer. A fine Professional Finger Print Outfit and a Full Course in Secret Service Intelligence given absolutely FREE.

A brilliant carreer in this uncrowded profession is within your grasp if you act now. Don't wait until this special offer has expired. Send the coupon today! Address

T. G. Cooke, *Pres.*, University of Applied Science
Dept. 14-74 1920 Sunnyside Ave., Chicago.

T. G. Cooke, *Pres.*, U. of A. S.
Dept. 14-74, 1920 Sunnyside Ave., Chicago

Dear Mr. Cooke: Without any obligation, send me your free book telling of the true exploits of Finger Print Experts you have trained. Also your special Big Free Offer.

Name..... *Age*.....

Address.....

City..... *State*.....